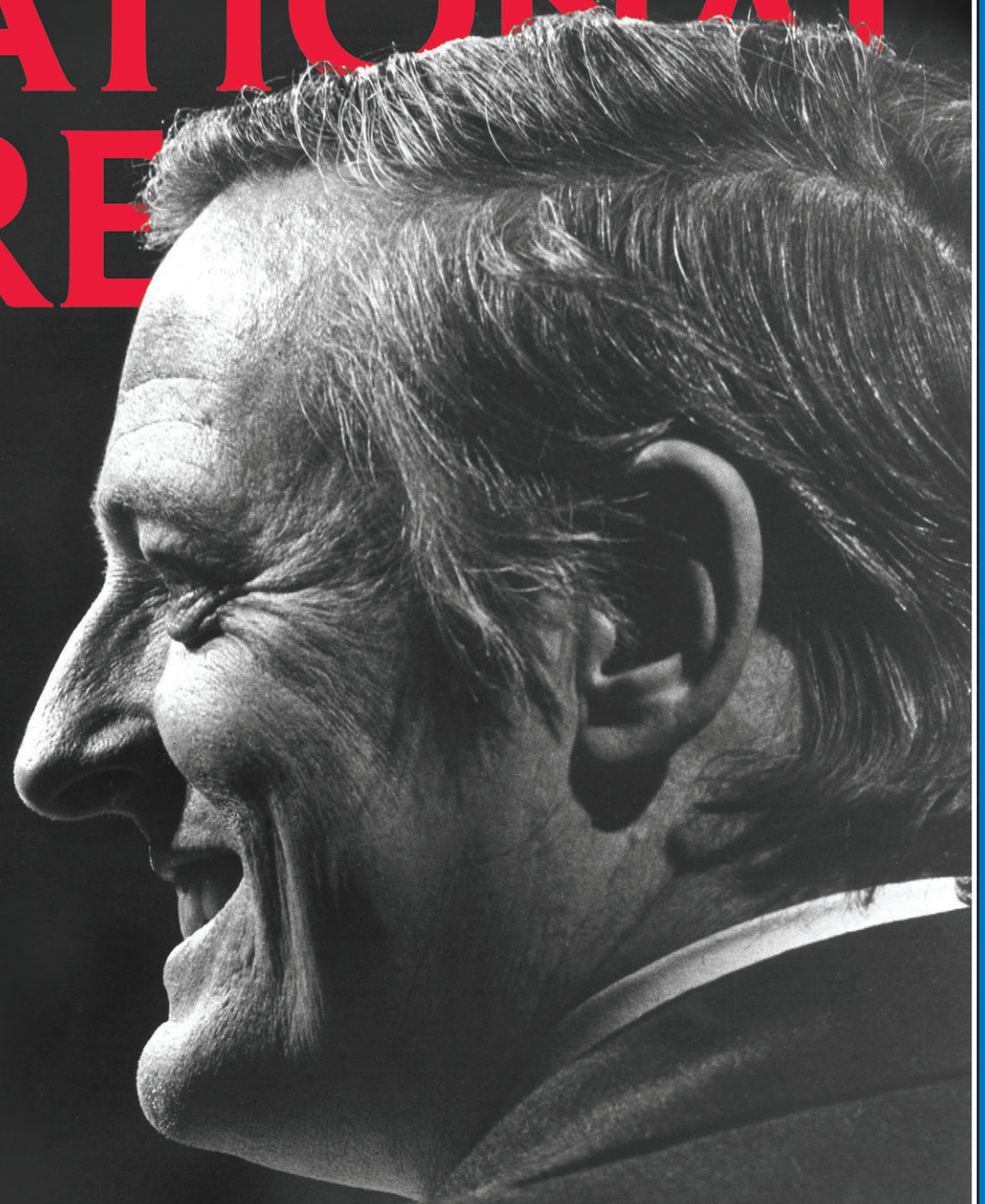


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Our tribute begins
on page 17.



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letters to the editor

READERS REMEMBER WFB

I was drawn early to Bill's enjoyment of life and everything in it, from skiing and sailing to Bach to the riches of the English language. As a NATIONAL REVIEW intern in the summer of 1975, my strongest memory is of the editors' laughter over drinks after the magazine had been put to bed. Knowing that I was looking for a piano on which to practice, Bill allowed me the use of his apartment (and his Bösendorfer) and sent me the music for a Scarlatti sonata he liked. Greater generosity I have never encountered.

Daniel Ritchie
St. Paul, Minn.

More than two decades ago, after stints as a reporter for two tiny newspapers on opposite coasts, I was living at home in Los Angeles. I had become an NR reader while in high school and a right-thinking campus scold while in college. On a whim I wrote WFB a letter, enclosing clippings and noting that, while mine wasn't a supercharged intellect, I got things done.

One day in May 1983, the phone rang at my house. It was WFB. He had a small project that needed shepherding, and he asked if I'd like to take the post. Fully aware of the reigning ethos at my alma mater (despite my best attempts to change it), WFB said, in that unique lilt, "Of course, you can ascertain I'm taking a chance on a Williams man."

The project became a book, and led to bigger newspaper jobs, a post in the Bush 41 State Department, eleven years on the Hill, and now a position with Bush 43. WFB's letter of recommendation was solid gold. In fact, the imprimatur of NR and of WFB has never lost its importance to my career. My work for WFB and NR is also the post of which I am proudest, and which most commands the interest of others.

Jeff Nelligan
Via e-mail

While serving in Germany as a young cavalry officer, patrolling the East German border and personally confronting the barbarity of Communism, I discovered NATIONAL REVIEW. And it was there that my conservative instincts found their voice. Reason, wit, clarity, temperament: all of it flowing from that fount of wisdom whose name appeared at the top of the masthead.

I would take copies of NR into the field as we maneuvered across the German countryside. I often read by flashlight, or in the red lights of a darkened gunnery tower. I was amazed at how much there was to learn. What a great professor I had in WFB and his magazine.

I am deeply saddened by his passing, as I was by that of Ronald Reagan. Again it is as though I have lost a grandfather, a mentor, a friend. As they laugh together once again, let us remember them with gratitude.

David W. Parmly
Knoxville, Tenn.



In the late 1950s, one of my buddies and I suggested an interview with William F. Buckley for our high-school literary magazine. Mr. B. agreed.

My mother drove us to the office. There was the young Mr. Buckley—he offered us coffee (terrible) and seats before his very own desk. I sat down, awestruck.

We had a list of questions. I attempted to read the first and froze solid. My partner had to read it. I tried the second. No go. So the afternoon went.

Afterward, Mr. Buckley autographed copies of *God and Man at Yale* for us. Mine read, "To Bill, for an enjoyable afternoon of intelligent conversation."

He took away every bit of shyness. People have always commented on my ability to pick up the phone and call a senator out of the blue, or to march into a CEO's office and tell him exactly how he is screwing up his company. Mr. Buckley gave me that.

Bill Watkins
Via e-mail



Part electric vehicle. Part combustion engine. GM's new 2-mode hybrid delivers the best of both worlds. It's the only American designed and built hybrid system that provides significant fuel economy* and great performance by offering two modes—one for city driving, the other for highway driving—to improve fuel efficiency and maintain the capabilities expected of a full-size SUV.

It's just one part of GM's commitment to energy diversity—creating vehicles that use fuels from diverse sources, reducing our dependence on petroleum and lowering emissions. We're part of the Baltimore, Maryland team that's making a transformation in vehicles today.

Magda J. Perez

Transmission Technician Valve Body Area

Johnnie R. Batts

Hybrid 2-Mode Transmission Coordinator



* The 2008 2-mode hybrids are estimated to have a 25 percent or more combined fuel economy improvement over current Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon models.

THE WEEK

■ Let's pray they have a dictionary in Heaven.

■ Late in 2007 word went around that the *New York Times* had a story on John McCain that could sink him, but when that story finally ran at the end of last month it went off like a dud. In 1999, wrote the *Times*, Vicki Iseman, a lobbyist 31 years younger than the senator, became such an obtrusive presence around his offices that two aides said they told McCain to keep her at arm's length. The aides were not named in the story, and the McCain campaign slammed the *Times* for "engag[ing] in a hit-and-run smear." *The New Republic* reported that the story had been held and watered down because, while the reporters thought they had "nailed" an affair, executive editor Bill Keller disagreed. Both media critics and readers commenting on the *Times*'s website sided with McCain, who, giving many hostages to fortune, denied that he had had improper relations with Iseman, political or romantic, and even that his aides had raised this possibility. Thus the story blew away—we hope permanently.

■ Let's get this one out of the way up front. In 1936 John McCain III was born at a naval air base in the Panama Canal Zone, to a naval officer and his wife. The Constitution (Article II, Section 1) says that "No person except a natural born Citizen . . . shall be eligible to the Office of President." Is McCain eligible, asked the *New York Times* in a solemn article? "I don't have much doubt about it," answered former solicitor general Theodore Olson, now preparing an analysis of the matter for the McCain camp, though the *Times* added "that he still needed to finish his research." Search no further. "[8 U.S.C. 1403] (a) Any person born in the Canal Zone on or after February 26, 1904 . . . whose father or mother or both at the time of the birth of such person was or is a citizen of the United States, is declared to be a citizen of the United States." There are no illegals in at least this aspect of the McCain campaign.

■ The Democratic presidential candidates, and interested onlookers, are debating whether Obama's eloquence is a reason to vote for him. We challenge the premise. Obama is not eloquent. The unscripted senator does not string words together to impressive effect; Clinton is his match in debates. His scripts are mush. They neither argue nor enlighten. But he delivers those scripts very well. We do not mean that comment as a slight: He is a compelling performer. On the question of how important this faculty is, let us split the difference: The ability to inspire his countrymen is indeed a quality a president should have, provided that he uses it to lead them the right way.

■ In the Department of Unsolicited Testimonials, an endorsement from Louis Farrakhan is the Big Stinker. Barack Obama

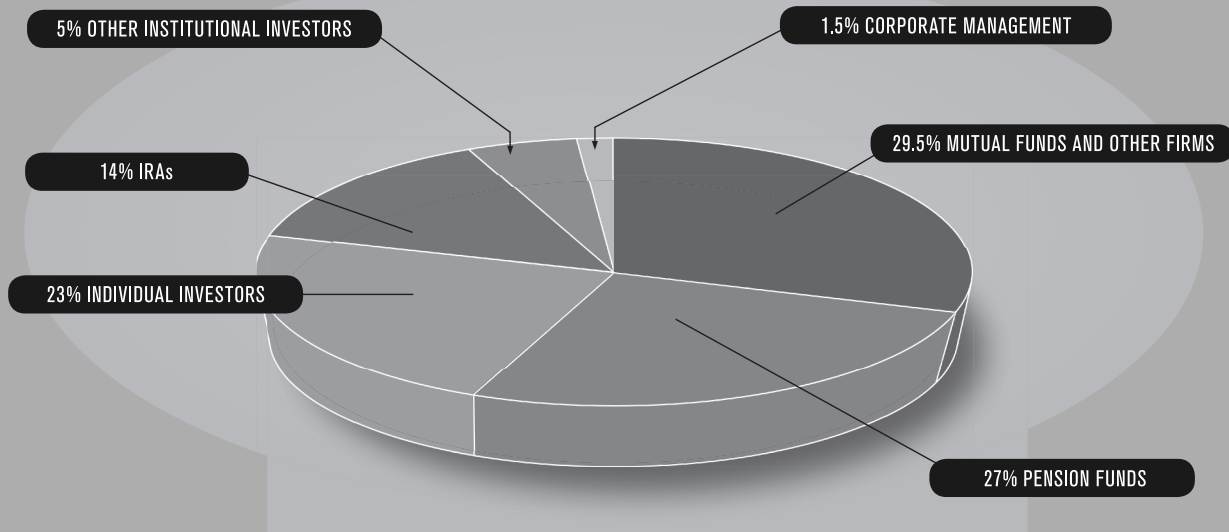


See page 10

was so honored by the racist crank, and then asked about it during the Cleveland presidential debate. He called Farrakhan's anti-Semitism "unacceptable and reprehensible," and cited his own past "denunciations" of it. Hillary Clinton chimed in to suggest that he should go farther and "reject" Farrakhan's support—a distinction without a difference, really. All clear for Obama? Not quite, because the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, the pastor of Obama's Chicago church, has honored Farrakhan and echoes some of his black-nationalist views. Obama has compared Wright to "an old uncle who sometimes will say things that I don't agree with." If it is often wrong to apply the stern standards of public life to families, it can be equally wrong to inject the love of the home into public life. Barack Obama can embrace the good that his church has done and does for him, while rejecting (thank you, Senator Clinton) its extreme beliefs.

■ Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, trolling for votes in Ohio, promised to renegotiate NAFTA and, if their demands go unmet, to pull out of the agreement. The assumption seems to be that Canada and Mexico will be delighted to let us rewrite

Do you own an oil company?



U.S. Oil and Natural Gas Company Ownership, 2007

If you own mutual funds or a retirement account, chances are you're among the tens of millions of Americans with a stake in the oil and natural gas industry. A recent study* by economist and former Clinton Administration official Robert Shapiro found the majority of oil and natural gas company shareholders are "middle-class U.S. households with mutual fund investments, pension accounts or other retirement accounts and small portfolios."

So when Congress starts talking about raising energy taxes or taking "excess profits" from U.S. oil companies, look at the facts and ask yourself, "who does that really hurt?" Read the full study at EnergyTomorrow.org.

EnergyTomorrow.org

THE *people* OF AMERICA'S
OIL AND NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY

*SONECON: *The Distribution of Ownership of U.S. Oil and Natural Gas Companies*, September 2007

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THE WEEK...

their labor and environmental laws without asking anything of us in return—or, at least, that Ohio voters will not think through this implication of the pledge. An Obama adviser reportedly assured the Canadian government not to worry about this campaign rhetoric, but Obama subsequently denied that any such assurance was given. If Obama is telling the truth, it reflects well on his character and poorly on his suitability for the presidency.

■ It did not get much attention during the primaries, but John McCain has a pretty bold free-market health-care-reform plan. He would end the unlimited tax break for employer-provided health insurance and replace it with a \$5,000 tax credit for families to use to buy health insurance either on their own or through their workplace. He would also make it possible to buy insurance across state lines, creating a competitive national market. This plan should reduce the number of uninsured Americans by about half. It would make it easier for people to take their insurance with them from job to job. It would create incentives to keep costs down. And it would do all of this without mandates, tax increases, or the threat of rationing. Republicans used to be complacent about the state of our health-care system. They aren't any more. But Democrats, who think they own the issue, may be getting complacent about the politics of health care.



■ Ralph Nader, in his heyday as a self-appointed “consumer advocate,” was a prig and a scold, overbalancing whatever good he did by his preening, his trouble-making, and his scarcely concealed left-wing economic agenda. In the last twelve years he has become something less—a laughingstock perennial presidential candidate. After his

maiden run in 1996, he was a factor in the 2000 race, possibly pulling enough votes from Al Gore to make Florida and its recount crucial. But he marched on in 2004, and has announced that he will come back again this year. He is a cross to the Left, active enough every leap year to distract zealots and anger pragmatists, not active enough in between to try to build a functioning third party. However much we might like that, his frivolous persistence diminishes the process, just as surely as tyros and kooks.

■ Supporters of “comprehensive” immigration reform argued for amnesty now in exchange for securer borders later. Make that *way* later. Federal officials recently reported that the first 28-mile phase of a “virtual fence” along the Arizona border, with mobile towers, sensors, cameras, and other assorted doodads, has been delayed by at least three years. The project President Bush called “the most technologically advanced

border-security initiative in American history” has been unable to advance beyond a failed pilot program. And the 2006 Secure Fence Act’s mandate to build 700 miles of double-layered fencing has been almost completely ignored. The Department of Homeland Security has installed only 80 miles of the 370-mile single-layer pedestrian fence it has committed to build. Robert Frost had it right: “miles to go.”

■ There are a tad fewer than 230 million adult Americans, and a tad more than 1 percent of us are now behind bars, according to a report from Pew Center. Tallying up the counts for federal and state prisons and local jails at the start of 2008, the Pew researchers came up with 2,319,258 inmates. This is the first time that more than 1 percent of us have been locked up. Pew lists the usual dismal breakdowns by ethnicity. Among adult males, 1 in 106 non-Hispanic whites is incarcerated, 1 in 36 Hispanics, 1 in 15 African Americans. (The corresponding denominators for women are 355, 297, 100.) Deploping the cost of all those cells and guards, the director of the Pew project moaned that “for all the money spent on corrections today, there hasn’t been a clear and convincing return for public safety.” You sure about that, sir? Would it be just a coincidence, then, that while these incarceration rates rose, crime rates fell?

■ President Bush has come under a lot of criticism for issuing “signing statements” while approving legislation. In these statements he typically announces that he will disregard provisions of the law he considers unconstitutional, or interpret ambiguous provisions so as to ensure they accord with his understanding of the Constitution. Senator McCain says that he would “never”—he repeated the word three times—issue such a statement. Instead he would veto legislation with constitutional infirmities. As Ed Whelan of the Ethics and Public Policy Center has explained, adhering to that position would result in constant constitutional crises. Nearly every spending bill includes a legislative veto, and the Supreme Court has rightly held that this practice exceeds the legitimate authority of Congress. If the president concludes that he has to sign spending bills to keep the government running, he will then have only unpalatable options: violate his oath of office and enforce the unconstitutional provision, or disregard it without issuing any explanatory statement. Senator Obama’s take on the question is much more thoughtful. He objects to the use of signing statements “to raise implausible or dubious constitutional objections to the legislation,” but he understands that such statements are sometimes necessary. Perhaps he can arrange for his fellow senator to receive a tutorial on the subject.

■ Hamas versus Israel is a prime example of what military specialists call the asymmetrical warfare now practiced between states and terrorist organizations. Hamas steadily and increasingly fires rockets at the towns near Gaza, and Iran has been secretly equipping it with longer-range missiles capable of doing large-scale damage. Israeli lives and property are in danger, and beyond that, Israel’s sovereignty is called into question at a time when Iran is promising to wipe it off the map. Israel has the aircraft and the tanks, and could flatten or re-occupy Gaza, if the chosen strategy demanded such drastic

courses. The latest round of fighting, short but sharp, has left more than 100 Palestinians dead, most of them Hamas men, and has also wrecked armories and depots making or stocking their rockets. But Hamas welcomes human and material losses in the certain knowledge that they serve to stoke anti-Israeli sentiment, provoking international calls for Israel's response to the daily barrages to be "proportionate," a euphemism for not responding at all. Safe in the knowledge that Iran will continue to subsidize and support it, Hamas believes this asymmetrical warfare will bring nothing but gains. So the rockets fall, and will do so until Israel decides between two unpleasant options, either to take out Hamas or to come to terms with it. Meanwhile, on this front and others, Iran accumulates power.

■ The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, have been making life miserable for that country, and many others too, for some 40 years. Hiding in the jungle between Colombia and Ecuador, FARC is nominally Communist but more essentially has become a screen for crime, including drug-running and hostage-taking. Colombian president Álvaro Uribe has been making a determined effort to defeat it. The details are unclear, but a military strike has taken out 17 FARC

guerrillas, among them Luis Edgar Devia, who operated under the alias of Raúl Reyes. A hard-line Marxist aged 59, he was one of seven members of FARC's ruling committee, and the probable successor to Manuel Marulanda, the 77-year-old FARC leader. The strike occurred across the border with Ecuador, whose president has mobilized troops in response. In Venezuela, Hugo Chávez—who, according to documents on a laptop seized in the strike, has funded FARC to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars—decreed a minute's silence for Devia, saying, "We pay tribute to a good revolutionary." Mobilizing troops in his turn, Chávez threatened Colombia with war. Daniel Ortega, the old Sandinista who is now Nicaraguan president, called Devia's death "a total provocation," and even Fidel Castro, supposedly in retirement, could not resist chipping in likewise. The inference from this burst of revolutionary machismo is that Colombia has scored a real success.

■ When not menacing his neighbors, Chávez is menacing Venezuelans—sometimes in small ways. In his war against U.S. "imperialism," he is cracking down on their Spanish. Or rather, their English. He does not want state employees to use

Cronies against Capitalism

FOR economists, the *economic* success of capitalism creates something of a puzzle. When combined with a relatively small government, capitalism is a well-established ticket to improved standards of living. Yet many countries resist. Why?

A flurry of research has shed new light on the question. The fascinating implication of the latest findings is that pre-existing social attitudes toward luck may be the crucial determinant of the political path of a society.

The nearby chart is taken from a widely discussed paper by economists Alberto Alesina, Edward Glaeser, and Bruce Sacerdote. The investigators set out to discover why the U.S. does not have a large welfare state (at least compared with Europe) and uncovered a striking difference between Americans and Europeans. If you ask Americans whether the poor are lazy, 60 percent say yes. If you ask Europeans, only 26 percent say yes.

Consider now a striking pattern that is visible in the chart. The authors found that large welfare states emerge in countries where citizens generally believe that luck determines income. If bad behavior (or laziness) is viewed as a source of poverty, then the welfare state is small. America has avoided the fate of Europe because its citizens disproportionately believe that luck is not that important a determinant of one's circumstances, but hard work is.

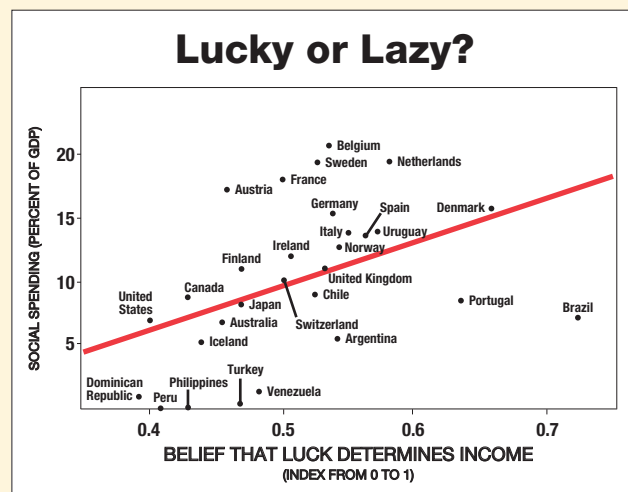
This might come as a relief to conservative Americans, who are ever fearful that the Left will succeed in imposing its version of a European welfare state. If Americans are predisposed to believe that high incomes are generally merited, then they will be resistant to change, even if

sold by a charismatic salesman like Barack Obama.

A related study by Rafael Di Tella and Robert MacCulloch has found that rampant corruption tends to precede big national swings to the left. This link is itself related to the picture that emerges from the chart. When capitalists succeed because of bribes and corruption, citizens become less convinced that the income distribution reflects merit, and more willing to redistribute.

Recent corporate scandals, and the shameful behavior of the Republican Congress, set the stage for a left-wing backlash that was fully consistent with the historical precedent. It takes more than luck to maintain a free society. If we are to avoid acquiring a welfare state the size of Europe's, we must be vigilant defenders of the rule of law and merciless punishers of the corrupt among us.

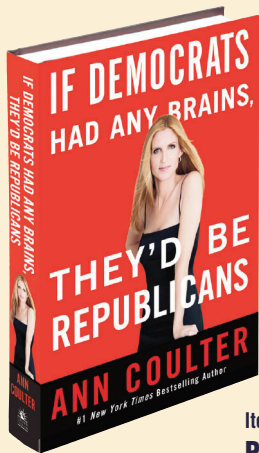
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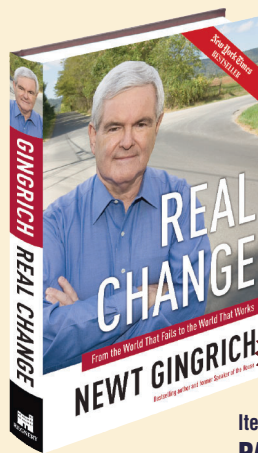
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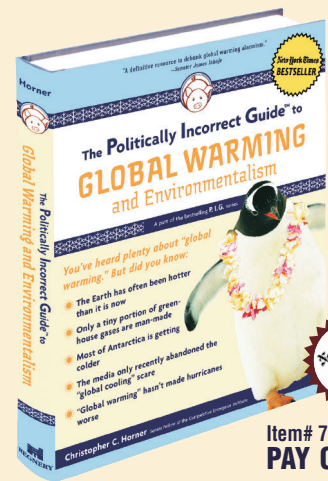
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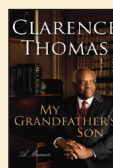
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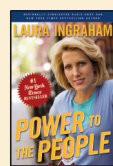
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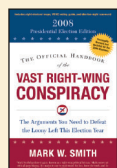
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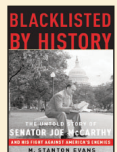
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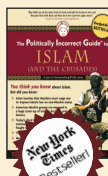
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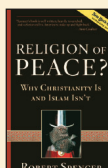


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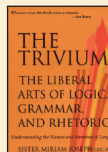
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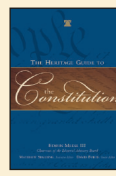
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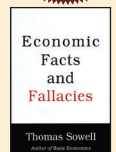


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THE WEEK...

English words, such as “password,” “mouse” (for the thing next to your computer), and “marketing.” (As a good socialist, Chávez should be against marketing in any language.) In the bad old Mitterrand days, Jack Lang, as minister of culture, tried to stop French people from using English words. (This despite his first name.) But they persisted, having the freedom to do so. Do Venezuelans have the same leeway? In related news, Chávez is forcing radio stations to play less foreign music. And he is pumping money into native cinema, to fight what he calls “the dictatorship of Hollywood.” Well, there he may have a point . . .

■ Last year, at an Ibero-American summit, Chávez let loose against José María Aznar. He called the former prime minister of Spain—who is a classical liberal—a “fascist” (among other things). This caused the king of Spain, Juan Carlos, to say, “Por qué no te callas?” (“Why don’t you shut up?”) This rebuke of Chávez became an overnight sensation. The phrase “Por qué no te callas?” was on lips all over the Spanish-speaking world. And people used Juan Carlos’s rebuke—an actual recording of it—as a cellphone ring. Now, the French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, has started a similar sensation. He was wading through a crowd, greeting people genially, shaking their hands. And one citizen of the Republic said, “Don’t touch me,” not wanting his flesh soiled by the Conservative leader. So Sarkozy, retaining his smile (tightish), still wading through the crowd, said, “Get lost, you jerk.” (We have translated very mildly.) Instantly, a buzzphrase—a cellphone ring, a YouTube smash, etc. Statements such as those by Juan Carlos and Sarko are not especially refined. But that does not mean they are inapt. They are simply human, and, in a way, uplifting—part of the joy of politics, part of the joy of living.



■ Months ago, Vladimir Putin announced that his successor as president of Russia would be Dmitri Medvedev. The KGB then had to organize an election to cover this anointing. This meant none except approved candidates, with intimidation and even detention of genuine democrats such

as Garry Kasparov. Also control of the media, and refusal to allow foreign observers on the day, and finally falsification of ballots. For the KGB this was child’s play, and they even got pretty exactly the percentage of the vote Putin had specified in advance. In the aftermath, only small numbers of Russians dared to protest the swindle, and scores of them were picked up and driven away by the riot police, out in force as usual. Medvedev’s part of the deal is to have Putin as his prime minister. Everyone is taking it for granted that Putin will use Medvedev the way a ventriloquist uses his dummy. Aged 42,

a lawyer by training in a country without law, and a chief executive of Gazprom, the state company with a virtual monopoly on gas, he is an unknown quantity, and the possibility exists that his preferment by Putin and the KGB will give him ideas. Foreign policy is the president’s preserve, and everyone is waiting to see if Putin will really leave it to his nominee, or whether there will be power struggles behind closed doors. Kremlinology is back with a vengeance.

■ Prince Harry, younger son of the Prince of Wales, and third in line to the British throne, has usually been in the news as a night-clubber and tearaway. But he is also a serving soldier, as many members of the royal family have been over the years. His regiment is in Afghanistan, and last December he joined them there. The media were informed, on condition that the posting be kept secret. The nightmare of the government and the army was that the Taliban should hear about the prince and come for him as a prize trophy, also putting at special risk the lives of those serving with him. The Drudge Report revealed the prince’s whereabouts, and he had to be brought home. Poor chap, ruined by a journalistic scoop. His weeks in Afghanistan, he said, were the happiest of his life: “It’s very nice to be a normal person for once. I think this is about as normal as I’m ever going to get.” At least he had time to give his family, the army, and the country a much-needed boost.

■ Kosovo declared independence from Serbia on February 17, and the Serbs were not long in replying: On February 21, a crowd set upon the U.S. embassy in Belgrade, the Serbian capital, breaking in and setting fire to an office. The riot was in protest of America’s recognition of the new state, which was near immediate. Serbian unhappiness in the face of Kosovar independence was inevitable, but the violence and looting in the capital were not, and cannot be excused. More than 20 countries have officially recognized the new state. Let’s hope the Serbs don’t mount a siege on every embassy: We wonder whether Belgrade’s shops could withstand all the protest.

■ Despite Europe’s habitual criticism of hopelessly right-wing America, voters have recently chosen conservative governments in France and Germany, and on March 9 they may well do so in Spain. There, the opposition People’s Party (PP) has gained support by promising to remove 7 million low-paid workers from the tax rolls; the governing Socialists have responded by eliminating a burdensome “wealth tax” and cutting income-tax bills by an average of \$600. The main difference between the parties is on immigration. The PP proposes a contract that would require immigrants to learn the language, respect Spanish customs, and leave the country if they commit a crime or become unemployed for the long term; the laissez-faire Socialists call this plan “authoritarian and anti-social.” Imagine that—a country where even the Socialists are supply-siders, and voters are given a real choice on immigration.

■ The visit of the New York Philharmonic to North Korea went off without mishap, except for a slight contretemps about the relative heights of the U.S. and North Korean

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In the new issue of *Policy Review*

Our Fractured Supreme Court

The benefit of unanimity and the vanity of dissent

Shortly after taking office, Chief Justice John Roberts embarked on a campaign within the Court and, unusually, in the press, to revive the tradition of unanimity in Supreme Court decisions. He has spoken of his concern that the Supreme Court is losing its legitimacy in the public's mind because of the frequency of dissenting opinions, arguing that this diminishes the respect and acceptance its decisions receive, and that the Court's public standing is enhanced if its decisions are unanimous, or nearly so. . . . The justices' work product increasingly consists more of composing dissents and concurrences than of writing opinions for the Court: until 1941, 80 to 90 percent of all opinions were opinions for the Court; now the number is less than 50 percent . . . — with separate opinions proliferating like mushrooms after a summer rain. At the extreme, this proliferation of opinions makes a joke of the Court's core function "to say what the law is," in Chief Justice Marshall's phrase

—Michael Schwartz

The Optimistic Thought Experiment

In the long run, there are no good bets against globalization

At various points, like a mirage in the desert, the goal of the [globalization] project has seemed almost within reach, only to fail or be postponed every time, at least thus far. For the past three centuries, the great rises and falls of the West track the high and low points of the hope for globalization. And whether by cause or effect or both, the abstract hopes of a global order also are mirrored in the virtual world of money and finance. The rises and falls of the globalizing West have been tracked by the peaks and valleys of the stock market. Almost every financial bubble has involved nothing more or less than a serious miscalculation about the true probability of successful globalization.

—Peter Thiel

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THE WEEK...

flagstuffs on the concert stage. The Norks' was higher; our people objected; a flagstaff of equal height was brought in. That was, however, the only moment of patriotic self-assertion in this sad episode. Depressing to report, not one member of the orchestra had refused to go to Pyongyang to protest the manifold and well-documented horrors visited on the people of North Korea by the appalling Kim dictatorship.



Nor did any seem disturbed by the threat that a nuclear Kimocracy poses to its neighbors, or to us. The modal sentiment among orchestra members seems to have been the one expressed by bassist Jon Deak: "We wouldn't go and play for Hitler, but this is different." Why is it different? Because Kim has not invaded Poland?

■ Brown followed Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, and Stanford in announcing steep tuition cuts: It will no longer require any payment from students whose parents make less than \$60,000 a year, and will give grants rather than student loans to those whose parents make less than \$100,000 a year. The elite colleges are reacting to the extreme heft of their own endowments, fattened by alums who earned mega-millions from high tech and hedge funds. The collegiate gold rush means that schools can march on seemingly forever with what they now have, though it makes them morally vulnerable to the resentment of parents gouged by their towering costs—hence this measure of relief. The cuts will increase the pain of small colleges that must still charge an arm and a leg, not having struck it rich, and will fortify the already immense advantages of the top tier. Isn't it good we revolted from England and threw off its class system?

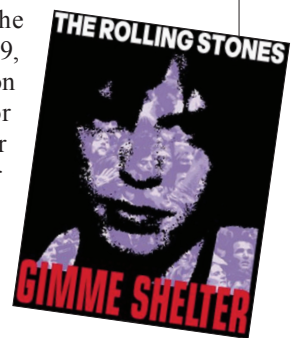
■ Heather Mac Donald of *City Journal* deserves praise for exposing what she calls the "campus rape myth"—the idea, propagated university administrations with bogus statistics, that college girls face an almost constant threat of rape. The misinformation that, by graduation, one in four female students will have been sexually assaulted serves only to trivialize one of the most horrific experiences in life (when it is genuinely experienced). Mac Donald reveals what's really behind the number: Drunken promiscuity abounds, and some researchers classify that as sexual assault. Of the victims interviewed for the 1987 study that kicked off the one-in-four hysteria, 73 percent said they had not been raped. The situation is a sad one, and suggests that young men and women should take a hard look at their conduct and its morning-after consequences.

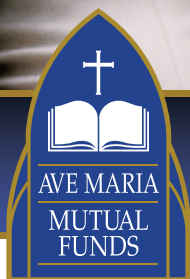
■ Call it the origin of political species: Noted Darwin scholar David Sloan Wilson and a colleague who rejoices in the

Valkyrie-worthy name of "Ingrid Storm" have taken a scientific look at the ways in which liberals and conservatives are different, and the results are illuminating. Fitting out a group of white, Protestant teens with beepers and checking in at random intervals to discover what the subjects were doing, thinking, and feeling, they discovered that liberals feel more stress and are less connected to friends and families than are conservatives. *The Economist* reports: "Liberals were also loners, spending a quarter of their time on their own. Conservatives were alone for a sixth of the time. That may have been related to the fact that liberals were equally bored by their own company and that of others. Conservatives were far less bored when with other people. They also preferred the company of relatives to non-relatives. Liberals were indifferent." Conservatives have long argued that liberals are indifferent to family—and who but a creationist boob would argue with the great Darwin scholar?

■ What list begins as follows: Pop, Uo, Zip, Zodz, Zec . . . ? Right: Those are the names of the first few months in the Mayan calendar of pre-Columbian Central America. That would be the *civil* calendar, of course. The Mayans, who were obsessive chronometrists, had two others, one sacred and one a "long count." A legion of Mayan astronomers and arithmeticians toiled at keeping the three calendars in sync. The civil and sacred calendars were footling affairs, repeating themselves every 52 years, but the "long count" identified each day uniquely within a 1,872,000-day cycle—that's a little over 5,125 years. Why are we telling you this? Because the current "long count" cycle comes to an end on Friday, December 21, 2012 (or 2 Etznab 1 Kankin, according to the other two calendars—in case you are wondering). Dire things are predicted. Movie director Roland Emmerich (*Independence Day*, *10,000 B.C.*) has an end-of-the-world flick coming out next year with the title *2012*, based on this Mayan calendrical juncture. No doubt we shall be hearing much more about the dread date—which falls, please note, just seven weeks after a U.S. presidential election. Short the market!

■ Our Boomer readers will recall the Altamont rock concert of December 1969, at which the Rolling Stones and Jefferson Airplane performed free of charge for 300,000 fans. The event was recorded for posterity in the movie *Gimme Shelter*. For unfathomable reasons, presumably to do with the unfathomable 1960s, the organizers put members of the biker gang Hell's Angels in charge of security around the stage. The Angels' implements of choice for keeping fans away from the stage were pool cues and knives. One fan was stabbed to death. After that, the Stones decided they would no longer use Hell's Angels for security. That of course made the bikers mad. As has just been revealed, they hatched a plot to assassinate Mick Jagger by running a boat ashore near his Long Island beach house, avoiding the front-gate security. Alas, they couldn't get no satisfaction: Foul weather nearly sunk the boat. They all survived, and so did Jagger.





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OBITUARY

William F. Buckley Jr., R.I.P.

OUR founder and inspiration died in his study on February 27.

If ever an institution has been the lengthened shadow of one man, this publication is his. So we hope not to be thought immodest for saying that Buckley has had a greater impact on the political life of this country—and a better one—than some of our presidents. He created modern conservatism as an intellectual movement and then a political one. He kept it from drifting into the fever swamps. And he gave it a wit, style, and intelligence that earned the respect and friendship even of his adversaries. (To know Buckley was to be reminded that certain people have a talent for friendship.)

He inspired and incited three generations of conservatives, and counting. He retained his intellectual and literary vitality to the end; in his final years he remained capable of the arresting formulation, the unpredictable insight. He presided

over NR even in his “retirement,” which was more active than most people’s careers. It has been said that great men are rarely good men. Even more rarely are they sweet and merry, as Buckley was.

When Buckley started NATIONAL REVIEW—in 1955, at the age of 29—it was not at all obvious that anti-Communists, traditionalists, constitutionalists, and enthusiasts for free markets would all be able to take shelter under the same tent. Nor was it obvious that all of these groups, even gathered together, would be able to prevail over what seemed at the time to be an inexorable collectivist tide. When Buckley wrote that the magazine would “stand athwart history yelling, ‘Stop!’” his point was to challenge the idea that history pointed left. Mounting that challenge was the first step toward changing history’s direction. Which would come in due course.

Before he was a conservative, Buckley was devoted to his family and his church. He is survived by his son Christopher and his brothers Reid and James, and by his sisters Priscilla, Carol, and Patricia. Our sadness for them, and for us, at his passing is leavened by the hope that he is now with his beloved wife, Patricia, who died last year.





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Misremembering

THE death of William F. Buckley Jr. cast a pall over the office, of course, but we have been gratified by the immense outpouring of affection for him—an outpouring in which most of this issue participates. Three of the most common notes sounded in the editorial encomia to WFB ought, however, to be modified.

Nearly every appreciation of Buckley has noted that he was (and this magazine was) wrong about civil rights. Fair enough: He was, and we were, and the error was admitted. People who are otherwise good, and even whole societies, can be wrong about matters of moral import. A few of the notices have implied that hostility to the aspirations of American blacks was one of his animating impulses, which is a calumny.

There is the matter of Buckley's much-praised civility. He was nearly always civil, but liberals should not confuse civility in conservatives with tameness.

Liberals celebrated Buckley's retrospective opposition to the Iraq War and criticism of the current administration. What Buckley said was that if he had known before the war what he knew afterward—notably that the Iraqi regime did not have weapons of mass destruction—he would not have supported it. That is hardly heresy; we imagine many members of the administration privately agree. Buckley initially opposed the surge, but after seeing its early success believed it deserved more time to work.

He also believed that Islamofascism is a serious threat against which this country, and conservatives, should mobilize, just as they did against Communism. This is a point that Buckley's liberal fans do not emphasize.

Finally, there is the matter of Buckley's much-praised civility. He was nearly always civil, but liberals should not confuse civility in conservatives with tameness. When John F. Kennedy was assassinated, the first line of our next issue read: "The editors of NATIONAL REVIEW regretfully announce that their patience with President Lyndon B. Johnson is exhausted." Liberals are right to admire Buckley. They should admire him for the right reasons.

2008

Toil and Trouble

‘WHEN shall we three meet again?’ asks the First Witch at the beginning of *Macbeth*. “In thunder, lightning, or in rain?” “When the hurlyburly’s done,” answers the Second Witch, “When the battle’s lost and won.” “That will be ere the set of sun,” adds the Third Witch.

But not ere sunset anytime soon. On Little Super Tuesday, Hillary Clinton won Ohio convincingly, Texas narrowly, and threw in Rhode Island for good measure. Obama's streak of victories, which reached twelve with the early-evening addition of Vermont, was decisively broken. After two and a half months of hyperactivity, the Democrats look forward to an eon of seven weeks until their next major vote, in Pennsylvania on April 22.

It will be said that the fickle media, bored with Obamaphilia and eager to write about a fight, began taking a tougher line on him so as to even the playing field. The Obama campaign, meanwhile, will point to the fact that they still lead in the delegate count, and that, while Hillary may catch him, it is nearly impossible for her to overtake him in the contests remaining. (The superdelegates and the problematic results of Florida and Michigan are another matter.)

But surely the major new weather pattern was the chill of actual scrutiny falling on Barack Obama. He had been running as what Richard Brookhiser once called in these pages “the Numinous Negro.” He was a secular Christ child who offered to redeem us from racial anxiety, and therefore from political stasis. In the last week before Little Super Tuesday, reporters and voters finally discovered that Barack Obama is a politician, however attractive and compelling, who can be questioned like any other. Antoin “Tony” Rezko, a Chicago real-estate developer and political wheeler-dealer straight out of a Saul Bellow novel, was a major supporter of Obama's. He has gone on trial for allegedly shaking down management firms seeking the business of a teachers' pension fund in Illinois. This is guilt by association, unless, as some have wondered, Rezko helped Obama with the purchase of a house through sleight of hand, to avoid declaring a contribution.

More to the point, Austan Goolsbee, a University of Chicago professor who is Obama's chief economic adviser, reportedly assured Canadian officials that his man would not in fact repeal NAFTA, as he had been threatening in rustbelt Ohio. Was Obama snowing voters, or was his adviser snowing a foreign country? The Obama campaign's response to these embarrassments has been not to respond, or to do so testily. “I just answered, like, eight questions,” the candidate exclaimed during an unusually tart press conference. We do hope; we don't do Q&A.

Hillary Clinton has every reason to march on. She long ago showed that she was not encumbered by shame. She shows now that she is equally free of despair. What Democrats will feel about their contest as it winds on is another matter.

Obama was a secular Christ child who offered to redeem us from racial anxiety, and therefore from political stasis. In the last week before Little Super Tuesday, reporters and voters finally discovered that Barack Obama is a politician, however attractive and compelling, who can be questioned like any other.

Editor's Note

A few notes on this issue. We considered a black border on the cover but decided against it, because we are not marking a death but celebrating a life. Besides, Bill loved the blue border. During my time as editor, we twice experimented with borderless covers, and he was not amused.

John O'Sullivan leads off the issue with an essay on Bill's political and intellectual legacy (p. 18); Bill's stirring speech from NR's 30th-anniversary dinner, which President Reagan attended, provides a classic example of his rhetoric (p. 28); friends and colleagues remember Bill's life and career (p. 30), and these memories are interspersed with bits of Bill's writing about his passions; Christopher Buckley has a lovely piece about sailing with his father (p. 61); Charles Kesler gives us a guide to Bill's books (p. 70); and, finally, Mark Steyn explains what made the Blackford Oakes novels so remarkable (p. 76).

We hear from people who knew Bill in his many iterations. I first got to know him when I became the young, inexperienced

editor of his dear magazine—a daunting experience. Early on, I would take problems to him with trepidation but come away with a feeling of relief. Whenever something had gone wrong (even if it had happened just two hours ago), he wanted to put it aside and focus on the future—how to fix it, how to keep it from happening again, how to learn from it. No one was so adept at “moving on” as Bill. As someone wrote recently, his attitude toward life was “always forward.”

Which is not to say that my start as editor was entirely free of awkward moments. An example: I have always gone by “Rich.” The only people who call me “Richard” either don't know me or are my parents. But Bill thought “Rich” had an inappropriate informality, like “Jimmy” Carter, and wanted me to change my byline in NR to “Richard.” I told him I'd think about it—my way of saying, “No, I won't.” Bill, who was a master at pointed indirection in dealing with such matters, wrote a memo to all the staff saying that if

I changed to “Richard” it wasn't because I was putting on airs—his way of saying, “Yes, you will.”

“Richard” it was, and “Richard” it will stay—because that's the way Bill wanted it.

To say that he was our institutional bal- last is a profound understatement. He was more like—to paraphrase what he once said about Whittaker Chambers—“the center of the earth.” It is disorienting to produce an issue knowing he's not here to render his judgment on it. Nothing was more gratifying than to get one of his hastily typed e-mails saying of something in the magazine, “tHat was teRRIFFIC!!” And nothing was more dispiriting than to hear that a piece was dull—or even, alas, “wretchedly composed.”

Now that he's gone, I will always wonder, and can only hope that, from his new vantage point, this issue—and all that follow—will meet with his approval.

—RICHARD LOWRY



Man of Thought, Man of Action

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.—“Bill” to that half of the world he knew personally—was the star of many odd and significant stories. In two of the oddest and most significant stories involving him, however, Bill was not the central figure at all but one of history’s “extras.”

The better known story concerns his presence at Heston Aerodrome when Neville Chamberlain returned from his famous meeting with Hitler. Bill’s father made a detour while driving his son to boarding school in England to witness Chamberlain’s arrival. So WFB was on hand to hear Chamberlain announce that it was his and Hitler’s joint intention never to go to war again in their lifetimes.

Bill made less of this story than most of us would have done. In *Miles Gone By*, he tells us merely that, beset by homesickness, he spent his first ten days at the school praying for war so that his parents would have to bring him home. In later conversation he doubted this brush with history had particularly influenced his views on foreign policy.

Maybe. But it is hard to believe that a precocious (everyone agrees on *that*) twelve-year-old would not have drawn some conclusions from his small connection with such momentous events. After all, so many of Bill’s subsequent opinions—from the wickedness of appeasing the unappeasable to the general vanity of human wishes—are illustrated in advance by this tableau of Chamberlain’s earnest delusion. It suggests God tapping Bill on the shoulder and telling him to pay attention.

The second story I had entirely forgotten until I read Bill’s obituary in the *Financial Times*. This revealed that during his two years of military service, from 1944 to 1946, Bill had served as part of an honor guard at the funeral service of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Few dramatists but God would attempt such heavy symbolism—maybe Shakespeare. For Bill had come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. He was to spend the next sixty years seeking to deconstruct two of FDR’s main achievements: the New Deal welfare state and the Yalta settlement of Europe. Even as he accompanied FDR’s physical corpse, did Bill sense that his soldierly duty also indicated his ideological mission?

If so, he was taking on a vast, complacent, and apparently immovable status quo. The post-war period from 1945 until 1968 was very far from being a conservative one. Culturally, it was a liberal period with growing radical influences, combining Freudian psychoanalysis, Norman Vincent Peale’s decaffeinated Christianity, the birth of rock ’n’ roll, the “Beat” poets in America and “Angry Young Men” in Britain, fashions in rebellion from Camus to James Dean, and—as the Fifties turned into the Sixties—the start of the satire boom. Politically, it was the time

when Eisenhower in America and Churchill in Britain both accepted that their respective versions of the welfare state were there to stay. Likewise the Cold War division of Europe: “Rollback” was out, with a decided bang over Hungary, and anti-colonialism was in, with another bang over Suez. Liberal intellectuals, still anti-Communist, were happily convinced that America would gradually adopt welfare-state arrangements similar to those in Europe and Britain—to which, indeed, Communist economic structures were also converging. “New Republicans” did not contradict them very strongly. And this mild unresisted spreading consensus was given (by Daniel Bell) a name: “the End of Ideology.”

Bill Buckley saw this consensus as a kind of amnesiac ideology. It didn’t know it was an ideology and had forgotten its own name (which, for the curious, is “socialism”). But even in its most deluded moments, in which

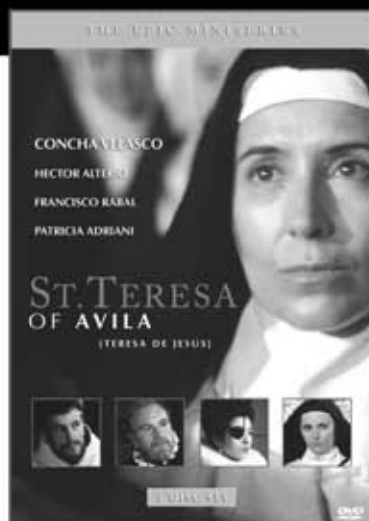
it imagined itself to be the central tradition of Western thought, this ideology threatened the individualism and Judeo-Christianity (to use a term not then in vogue) that were the main glories of that tradition. He accordingly set out to challenge and unmask it at every level. And he did so, in four distinct phases between 1951 and his death on February 27 of this year. In these four phases he played, successively, the picador (1951–1958), the theoretician (1958–1965), the organizer (1965–1981), and the guardian angel (1981–2008).

THE PICADOR: 1951–1958

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to fight the matador and confused enough to lose to him. Bill played the picador to an increasingly angry and confused bull of American liberalism from the day that *God and Man at Yale* was published in 1951. This book grew out of the alumni-day address that Bill was not allowed to give on his departure from his alma mater. Its argument, grotesquely summarized, was that Yale was not impartial in its undergraduate teaching on the key questions of Christianity and capitalism but was in effect hostile to both—and that something should be done about it.

Therein lay a real problem. Universities exist in a liberal society to provide independent islands of thought and argument. Tenure and academic freedom safeguard that independence. Was Bill prepared to sacrifice academic freedom on the altar of his political opinions? Liberal academics nationwide asserted with one voice that he was. McGeorge Bundy, in a pugnacious review of the book for *The Atlantic*, declared roundly: “I can imagine no more certain way of discrediting both religion and individualism than the acceptance of Mr. Buckley’s guidance.”

Bundy’s tough review was persuasive in 1951 because the political corruption of the universities was then a cloud no bigger than a man’s hand. It is far larger and more threatening today. But since Bill was not about to recommend state control of Yale, what could be done about it? He suggested that Yale might be held accountable by its alumni, who could withhold their financial aid. To which Bundy asserted that no large group of alumni would act in this way and that, if they did, Yale would ignore them. He proved right in the first case—and though the second is moot, he was probably right there too.

In short the picador’s lance broke on the bull’s tough hide—but it didn’t matter since the creature’s anguished and indignant howls attracted a large crowd of admiring onlookers. Bill was a national figure at 26, starting a career of debating and controversy that lasted half a century.

His next controversy chose itself. If wounding liberalism was your aim, then defending Sen. Joe McCarthy was an obvious tactic. McCarthy had enraged the liberal establishment even more than Bill had, with his charges that successive Democratic administrations had failed to remove obvious security risks from government. As we now know from the Venona transcripts and from recent works by Arthur Herman, M. Stanton Evans, and others, McCarthy’s charges were in part true, in part exaggerated, and in part false. But because the false charges were egregiously false, Senate liberals assisted by a compliant media were able to paint the senator as wholly mendacious and a danger to the Republic.

Bill and his brother-in-law, Brent Bozell, sought to remedy this with a 1954 book, *McCarthy and His Enemies*, that examined case by case the charges made by and against McCarthy and found him largely justified. It is a fascinating book full of careful research and fine distinctions. It also spoke for a larger segment of American opinion, including some liberal intellectuals, than the myth of McCarthyism now allows. As Irving Kristol wrote at the time in *Commentary*: “There is one thing that the American people know about Senator McCarthy: He, like them, is unequivocally anti-Communist. About the spokesmen for American liberalism, they feel they know no such thing. And with some justification.” Bill’s book was a series of variations on that theme.

But it was championing a lost cause. McCarthy’s public image was so blackened, not without his own assistance, that Dwight

Macdonald’s description of the book as giving “the general effect of a brief by Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft on behalf of a pick-pocket” had force. On this occasion liberalism received only a flesh wound from the picador, in part because it was so well-armored. As Elliott Abrams, reviewing the 1995 re-publication of *McCarthy and His Enemies* in these pages, pointed out, “It was in the McCarthy era that the iron triangle of liberal bureaucrats, a liberal press, and liberal Democrats in control of Congress was first evident.” It was thus ensured that McCarthy’s sins were punished while those of his enemies were thrust down the memory hole.

Bill drew the obvious conclusion. He could hardly found a rival Yale after *God and Man*, but he could found a magazine to disrupt the operations of liberalism’s iron triangle. NATIONAL REVIEW was established in 1955 and was from the first a picador in itself. It was, Bill said toward the end of his life, his greatest achievement.

Reflecting Bill’s public personality, NATIONAL REVIEW was sharp, witty, combative, crisp, unafraid, word-intoxicated, cultivated, and above all highly readable. It managed to combine elevated religious and philosophical themes with what Frank Loesser called “that slam-bang tang reminiscent of gin and vermouth.” And it was no respecter of stout parties, including the GOP, that were too lazy or uninformed intellectually to realize the high civilizational stakes in both domestic politics and the Cold War.

Bill’s philippics against the “New Republicanism” of Eisenhower and Nixon in the first decade of the magazine set a high standard in invective. In 1958 he gave a speech that was reprinted in NR under the title “The Tranquil World of Dwight D. Eisenhower,” in which he sought to explain why the Republican party had chosen a non-ideological (and therefore liberal-by-default) leader:

What the New Republicans needed was a great political shapelessness, an infinite ideological plasticity which, on approaching the great unresolved political problems that have arisen out of the growth of Communism and the omnipotent State, could be relied upon to ooze its way over those problems, without grind, or tear, or rasp or friction. The Eisenhower approach was designed not to solve problems, but to refuse, essentially, to recognize that problems exist; and so, to ignore them.

If this sounds overdrawn today, it performed an important task in the late Fifties. Bill realized that the statist and secularist liberalism that was always his target could never be defeated or even seriously checked as long as it had friends in both parties. So the picador began to stick his barbs in the New Republicans too because of their unwillingness (in their doomed search for a quiet life) to fight the necessary cultural wars of conservatism.

THE THEORETICIAN (1958–1965)

Even so, the new conservative movement that Bill was now erecting on the foundation of NATIONAL REVIEW needed more substantial armor than flouts and jeers or even serious negative criticism. It needed strong philosophical grounding, practical policy proposals, a rhetoric and platform appealing to substantial numbers of Americans, and a central overriding Idea that would unite the disparate groups opposing liberalism.

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Bill provided some of these essentials from his own personality. The picador radical was only part of him—that part which admitted, in his 1963 essay “Notes Toward an Empirical Definition of Conservatism,” that though he was a conservative spiritually and philosophically, “temperamentally I am not of the breed.” A second element was his strong Catholic faith, intellectually entrenched by the priests of the English school to which his father was driving in 1938, which sustained his clear and principled opposition to Communism. A third was his adamant individualism, philosophical in form to be sure and logically resulting in policies to cut taxes and reform welfare, but arising ultimately from his own “damn your eyes” sense of independence. Like Frank Johnson, an English conservative writer whom Bill admired, he took individualism to the extreme length of being an individual. This did not always please the dogmatists of individualism.

Nor did it please those on the Catholic Left who wanted to protect Catholicism from any libertarian virus. In 1961 Pope John XXIII issued an encyclical of mildly liberal tone on social questions, *Mater et Magistra*, that prompted Bill in his picador mode to include in NR’s “For the Record” a quip “going the rounds in Catholic conservative circles: ‘*Mater si, Magistra no!*’” Left Catholics, notably the Jesuit magazine *America*, promptly accused NR and Bill of rejecting the teaching authority of the Church on social questions.

Bill replied at length in NATIONAL REVIEW (since *America* would not publish his letter) that he regretted what was at worst a venial flippancy but that NR had made no substantive criticism of the encyclical, suggesting rather that it was concerned with what were trivialities by comparison with the geopolitical dangers of the time. He also pointed out (rightly) that the encyclical laid down relevant moral principles for general guidance, leaving the faithful to judge how best to blend these with prudential judgments in shaping policy. Accusations of “infidelity” to Church teaching, he concluded, were “uncharitable . . . irrational, and in the true sense, scandalous.”

This little storm soon passed, but it was a harbinger of major disputes to come. As liberal Catholics sought to push the Church leftward, Bill hired a succession of distinguished religious conservatives to defend orthodoxy and liberty simultaneously.

* * *

Bill recruited the best minds to NATIONAL REVIEW—James Burnham (geopolitics), Russell Kirk (culture), Will Herberg (religion), Whittaker Chambers (Communism), Frank Meyer (political theory), Henry Hazlitt (economics), Ernest van den Haag (crime and society), and many more. Myth and legend now
 ✎ embroider the rows that Bill (and Priscilla) adjudicated between

some of these older and then more celebrated figures. What is more impressive, however, is how Bill in his dealings and correspondence with them was constantly learning from their work in a dozen different disciplines.

The Economist’s Lexington described Bill recently as “the Grand Old Man of American conservatism.” To Bill in the Fifties and Sixties, however, these were the grand old men of conservatism. And the *pietas* that was one of Bill’s most attractive features led him to beg, borrow, and steal their wisdom for recycling to his readers who were fast becoming the followers of his new conservatism.

In particular, as Bill later said, James Burnham was “the domi-

nant intellectual influence in the development of this journal. . . . His commentary, during such crises as are merely suggested by mentioning Budapest, Suez, Berlin, the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, was sustained by the workings of a great mind.” But Burnham’s influence went beyond geopolitics. As Linda Bridges (who is NR’s institutional memory in person) recalls, Burnham was also a force keeping Bill and NR from advocating either abstention or third-party votes in the Fifties and Sixties. Bill had clearly been tempted toward such a course in his Eisenhower article. But Burnham directed him toward a form of politics that would build a movement within the regular party structure—which, inevitably, meant within the Republican party.

Famously, Bill completed this task by “purging” a variety of “wingnuts” from the new conservative movement.

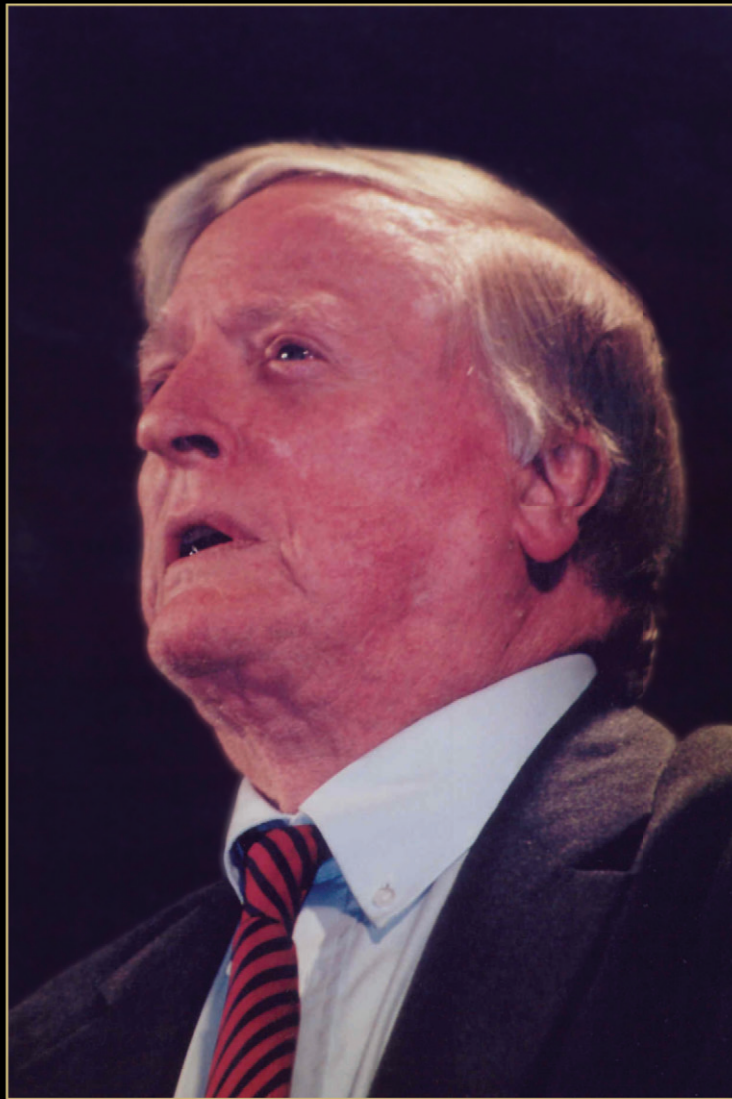
That has aroused as much hostility from paleoconservatives then and now as it has elicited praise from most other people. Bill’s actions are condemned by them as being somehow inconsistent with the spirit of liberty and the free play of debate. But Bill had no power to shoot dissenters or exile them to Siberian lumber camps. His “purges” consisted entirely of arguing against their beliefs and prohibiting them from appearing in NATIONAL REVIEW. These activities are generally known as “debating” and “editing.” If he had not persuaded others of the soundness of his position, he would have lost both debates and readers.

What then was the crux of his argument? In his essay on empirically defining conservatism, Bill discussed his differences with Ayn Rand and the Objectivists, and Robert Welch and the John Birch Society. The essence of Bill’s criticism is that they were intellectual extremists, often stimulating in their single-minded logical progressions, but likely to reach eccentric conclusions and so to discredit conservatism with regular folks. This criticism is certainly reasonable and probably right. At the time it persuaded most conservative-minded people.

But it has one drawback: It could well be applied to the young author of *God and Man at Yale*. He certainly would not have backed away from logical but extreme positions merely because



Requiescat In Pace



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they struck the masses as unreasonable. He would have gloried in annoying them further provided that he also confounded and dazzled them. This attachment to reasonableness was a new and significant development.

The picador phase of WFB had been in many respects the most important phase of his career. The theoretician had then built a magazine and an ideological movement. But that phase too was now drawing to a close. It was to be followed by something less poetic.

THE ORGANIZER: 1965–1981

It is one of Jane Austen's universally acknowledged truths that Bill Buckley developed a fusionist conservatism by uniting libertarians, traditionalists, and foreign-policy hawks around the common standard of anti-Communism. There is truth in that, but it is not the whole truth. And it is certainly not how people saw it at the time. The new conservatism of WFB, Russell Kirk, Frank Meyer, et al. was thought by many to be an exotic European import, Burkean in a Lockean liberal society, and romantically opposed to the kind of historical change that Americans naturally embraced.

In 1957 Samuel Huntington, provoked by this new conservatism, wrote an important article in the *American Political Science Review* in which he defined conservatism as the system of ideas that was employed to defend established institutions whenever they came under fundamental attack. "When the foundations of society are threatened," he wrote, "the conservative ideology reminds men of the necessity of some institutions and the desirability of the existing ones."

How did Buckley's new conservatism measure up? Huntington argued in effect that it was only half a conservatism. Those new conservatives who were mainly concerned to oppose international Communism he could endorse. The threat was real and so was the conservatism. Domestically, however, he felt that America in the liberal Fifties was in a state of such contentment that there was no real challenge to existing institutions and the Buckleyites were left flailing at ideological windmills rather than at real enemies. But Huntington did not believe that this political peace would continue long. America's liberal institutions would soon come under sustained radical attack, he forecast, and when they did, liberals rather than conservatives would step forward to defend them in a conservative spirit.

This was both very shrewd and slightly unfair—shrewd because it forecast the emergence of the first generation of neoconservatives in response to Vietnam and the Sixties revolution, unfair because it ignored the extent to which Buckley was already planting conservative sentiments in a broad swathe of American opinion, so that when the crisis arrived, there would be a conservative interpretation and response ready.

Following his own prescription of reasonableness, Bill had been initially skeptical of the Goldwater campaign. At NATIONAL REVIEW it had been William Rusher who foresaw and promoted the Goldwater insurgency. Bill had supported it manfully once it seemed a viable campaign, but he had not been able to persuade the candidate to pursue his own strategy of distancing himself from the Birchers. Bill's old mentor Willmoore Kendall—whom he brought to NR—said of Goldwater's famous line, "Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice," that there was nothing wrong

with it that couldn't be put right by 100,000 well-chosen words; Kendall was probably reflecting Bill's views. Goldwater's landslide defeat, though seen differently in retrospect, confirmed this caution the day after. It would have been readily understandable if Bill and NR had retreated into cultural politics thereafter. Instead they launched into a bold electoral venture.

Bill knew that if conservatism had any future, it had to be a hard political movement as well as a soft intellectual one. It also had to have appeal to people other than NR subscribers. And it had to succeed—or at least be protected from failure. So WFB launched a serious bid for the New York mayoralty disguised as a lark.

His serious aim was to win a respectable share of the vote. He won 13.4 percent. As the political insiders knew, he could have scored considerably higher if he had not agreed to shrug off attacks from the conservative Democrat in order to keep out the liberal Republican. He protected the conservative movement from the taint of failure by treating the campaign as a personal prank—that was the intent of his remark that if elected he would "demand a recount." Above all he got the votes of New York cops, Irish and Italian communities, the hard-working middle class, and other groups that had not until then been thought of as natural conservative voters. These voters would later be known as "Reagan Democrats." They would decisively tilt American politics to the right. But their fight was only one skirmish in a revolution.

The Sixties revolution, as Huntington had foreseen, produced a radical attack on liberal institutions. Most liberals appeased and surrendered to the radical attack, but some rebelled and became what we now know as neoconservatives. They were few in number but intellectually distinguished. And they found that they had quite a lot in common with the author of *God and Man at Yale* and with the conservative movement that had been growing unnoticed in the background. One pundit noticed in particular the suggestive coincidence that Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell had founded *The Public Interest* magazine in the same summer that Buckley had fought the New York mayoral election. Though there were differences, Buckley's campaign proposals on reforming welfare embodied the same kind of skeptical criticism of idealistic liberalism that *The Public Interest* would later specialize in. And this convergence in domestic policy was replicated by the almost identical positions that conservatives and neoconservatives took on Communism and the Cold War.

Marriage was an ideological possibility but not necessarily a political advantage. Some conservatives were suspicious of former liberals (some of whom were still actual Democrats). But Bill had always believed in welcoming converts. As the Sixties turned into the Seventies, NR increasingly showcased writers such as Michael Novak, Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Bill could welcome them without fearing a takeover because he knew that movement conservatism had three great advantages on its side. It had a well-worked-out philosophy that, in its practical applications, was fairly close to neoconservative ideas. It had, in himself, a strong and popular ideological leader who could advance and defend those ideas effectively in public—through his lectures and *Firing Line* programs—against both enemies and allies. And, in his friend Ronald Reagan, it had a national leader and potential president who was firmly in Bill's

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ideological camp. In order for the neoconservatives to get anything like an upper hand within the broad conservative movement, they would need a candidate of similar strength. If Daniel Patrick Moynihan had been prepared to run against President Carter in 1980, they might have become the dominant faction. But Moynihan would not run and all sides now rallied in support of Reagan's presidency.

The fully rounded conservatism that Huntington could not find in 1957 now not only existed but even dominated the political system following the suicide of liberalism. It was strong enough to withstand the cold winter of Watergate and the drenching shower of Carterism. Its main architect was Bill Buckley. And it won the White House in 1980.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL: 1981–2008

Reagan's victory was the triumph of Bill Buckley's philosophy and a catastrophic defeat for the suffocating liberalism that had dominated America in 1951. The rest was details.

Both Bill and NR were the establishment for the first time. Bill took to this role more comfortably than most other conservatives because he had been a member of New York's social establishment for three decades, a national celebrity since *God and Man at Yale*, a serious political leader since the New York mayoral election, a presidential appointee under Nixon, and a television personality since the success of *Firing Line*. But he was now enthusiastic about helping and assisting the establishment he had previously scorned and mocked, on the largely correct grounds that it was a different establishment.

There were disappointments: Reagan never abolished the Education Department. And disagreements: He signed an arms-control treaty that Bill and most other conservatives thought smelled of appeasement (wrongly, as it turned out; or so I believe). And Reagan's successor was not as ideologically inspiring as the Gipper.

Still, with the Cold War victory and the entrenchment of Reagan's domestic legacy under President Clinton—whose presidency effected welfare reform, the expansion of NATO, NAFTA, budgetary surpluses, and other moderate elements in the GOP's agenda—Bill had in effect achieved his political ambitions (astonishingly ambitious ones in 1951) more completely than any other major figure of his time. He still had work and fun ahead as he cruised along. But he began to withdraw progressively from his political and "movement" responsibilities, beginning with his full handover of the NATIONAL REVIEW editorship (to me, as it happens) at the 1990 Anniversary dinner. Over the next decade he handed the TV work over to the capable Peter Robinson, and cut down and eventually halted his hectic speaking schedule.

His interests moved away from politics—which began to bore him—toward fiction and religion. Blackford Oakes made way for conventionally serious novels about the historical figures he had known. At long last he wrote the "Catholic" book he had long been pressed to produce by friends. He even wrote a sort of autobiography—the wonderful *Miles Gone By*. (He had superstitiously avoided autobiography until then.) He continued playing serious games, founding BuckPac to defeat Lowell Weicker in Connecticut. And he revisited the controversies of his youth with the republication of the Yale and McCarthy books.

Much has been made of Bill's occasional second thoughts during this late period on segregation and the civil-rights revolution. He had undoubtedly said some wrong and foolish things at the time and he was right to retract them. It is less clear either that he was "wrong" in opposing the 1964 Civil Rights Act—since legal anti-discrimination, if unchecked, is ultimately incompatible with liberty—or that he "apologized" for doing so. His vague words seem to suggest he accepted a good end had been achieved but by unconstitutional means he distrusted. That leaves

open the possibility of achieving the same good end by better means.

But Bill was not the kind of logical extremist who insists on fighting hypothetical battles at a cost in real reputation. The Act had passed and achieved some good; he was happy to accept the fact and to modify his opposition accordingly. As Burnham might have told him, it would have been unreasonable to do otherwise.

Whatever the precise rights or wrongs of the matter, however, this much is clear: There had been two great moral choices facing America in the 1950s—segregation and Communism, oppressed black Americans and captive nations. Bill had initially stumbled, like half the nation, on the first, but he recovered himself and sought thereafter to reconcile civil equality with constitutional form. Many of Bill's enemies (and his most bitter ones) remained wrong or indifferent on the second until the Berlin Wall fell. Bill was asked to apologize—and he did express regrets. No such demand has been made of those who ignored the slavery imposed on half of Europe. When Bill visited that half of Europe in 1990, he was greeted by the dissidents recently promoted to ministerial office as someone who had kept their hope of freedom alive through the long twilight years.

At the end of his life Bill was weary—and justifiably so. Like Saint Paul he could say: "I have run the race, I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith." And he died still running.

Death may have been the only way of persuading Bill Buckley to slow down.

NR



The victors

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Professor Richard Brettell is Professor of Aesthetic Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas. He earned his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from Yale University. He has written many books and catalogues, including *Modern Art 1851–1929: Capitalism and Representation* and *Impression: Painting Quickly in France, 1860–1890*.

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'The Blood of Their Fathers Ran Strong'

What he fought, why he fought, in his words

EXPRESSIONS of gratitude can be most awfully trying to the ear of an audience, generally captive. But the act of gratitude nowadays is probably more often neglected than overdone. We published recently, in NATIONAL REVIEW, an essay on patriotism, in which the author made the same point rather more ornately than Edmund Burke did when he observed that a country, in order to be loved, must be lovely. Prof. Thomas Pangle concluded that there is plenty in our Constitution that justifies love of country; and, indeed, if the life we live here is not significantly different from the life they live over there, then George Kennan & Co. are correct that we oughtn't to keep nuclear weapons in our deterrent inventory.

A year before NATIONAL REVIEW was founded, I spent an evening with Whittaker Chambers, and he asked me, half provocatively, half seriously, what exactly it was that my prospective journal would seek to save. I trotted out a few platitudes of the sort one might expect from a 28-year-old foggy, about the virtues of a free society. He wrestled with me by obtruding the dark historicism for which he had become renowned. *Don't you see?* he said. *The West is doomed, so that any effort to save it is correspondingly doomed to failure.* I drop this ink stain on the bridal whiteness of this fleeting evening only to acknowledge soberly that we are still a long way from establishing for sure that Whittaker Chambers was wrong. But that night, challenged by his pessimism, I said to him that if it were so that providence had rung up our license on liberty, stamping it as expired, the Republic deserved a journal that would argue the historical and moral case that we *ought* to have survived: that, weighing the alternative, the culture of liberty *deserves* to survive. So that even if the worst were to happen, the journal in

which I hoped he would collaborate might serve, so to speak, as the diaries of Anne Frank had served, as absolute, dispositive proof that *she* should have survived, in place of her tormentors—who ultimately perished. In due course that argument prevailed, and Chambers joined the staff.

To do what, exactly? The current issue of NATIONAL REVIEW discusses of course the summit conference, the war in Afghanistan, Sandinista involvement in Colombia; but speaks, also, of the attrition of order and discipline in so many of our public schools, of the constitutional improvisations of Mr. Rostenkowski, of the shortcomings of the movies *Eleni* and *Macaroni*, of the imperatives of common courtesy, of the relevance of Malthus, of prayer and the unthinkable, of the underrated legacy of Herman Kahn. The connections between some of these subjects and the principal concerns of NATIONAL REVIEW are greatly attenuated. Attenuated, yes, but not nonexistent: because freedom anticipates, and contingently welcomes and profits from, what happens following the calisthenics of the free mind, always supposing that that freedom does not lead the mind to question the very value of freedom, or the authority of civil and moral virtues so to designate themselves. There are enough practitioners in this room to know that a journal concerned at once to discharge a mission and to serve its readers needs to be comprehensively concerned with the flora and fauna of cultural and political life. We have done this in NATIONAL REVIEW, and because we have done this, you are here—our tactical allies, most of you; our strategic allies, all of you . . .

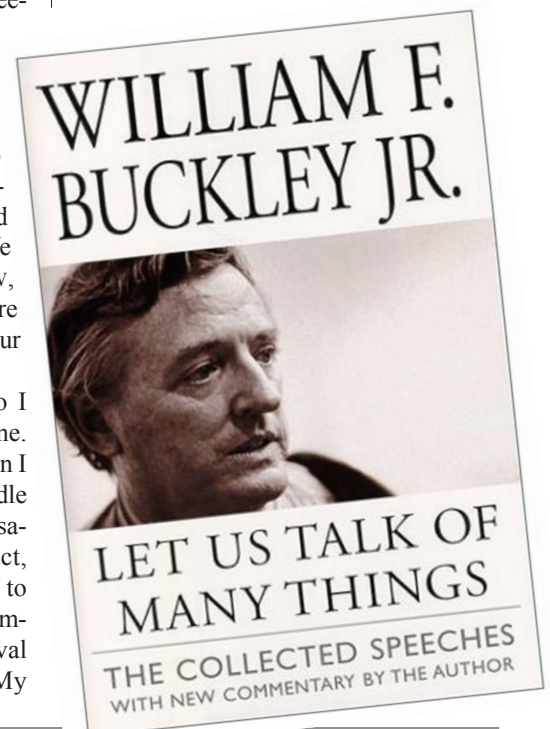
Mr. President, fifteen years ago I was interviewed by *Playboy* magazine. Towards the end of the very long session I was asked the question, Had I, in middle age, discovered any novel sensual sensations? I replied that, as a matter of fact, a few months earlier I had traveled to Saigon and, on returning, had been summoned by President Nixon to the Oval office to report my impressions. "My

novel sensual sensation," I told *Playboy*, "is to have the president of the United States take notes while you are speaking to him."

You need take no notes tonight, Mr. President. What at NATIONAL REVIEW we labor to keep fresh, alive, deep, you are intuitively drawn to. As an individual you incarnate American ideals at many levels. As the final responsible authority, in any hour of great challenge, we depend on you. I was nineteen years old when the bomb went off over Hiroshima, and last week I turned 60. During the interval I have lived a free man in a free and sovereign country, and this only because we have husbanded a nuclear deterrent, and made clear our disposition to use it if necessary. I pray that my son, when he is 60, and your son, when he is 60, and the sons and daughters of our guests tonight will live in a world from which the great ugliness that has scarred our century has passed. Enjoying their freedoms, they will be grateful that, at the threatened nightfall, the blood of their fathers ran strong.

—WFB

This speech was delivered on the occasion of NR's 30th anniversary, before an audience that included President Reagan.



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Remembering WFB

Brother

PRISCILLA L. BUCKLEY

WHAT was young Billy like? A pigeon-toed, skinny little boy in short pants, his bony knees covered with scabs, too busy asking a question to watch where he was going. As sixth in a family of ten, his boast was that he was the top of the bottom half. I was firmly top half. Though low on the totem pole, Billy was no copycat. He didn't hunt like John, or love nature like Jim, or play golf and tennis like Allie or me. His great enthusiasms were riding: With Jane and Patricia, the sisters who flanked him, he explored every dirt road and trail around our home in Sharon, Conn., and he sailed. Oh, how he loved sailing. His greatest aspiration, as a boy, was to cop the battered faux-silver trophy for the most wins in the weekly "regatta" on the grandly named but diminutive Lake Wononscopomuc (length: one mile). His great love—from the day of her birth—was his red-headed, just-younger sister, Patricia (Tish).

But what I remember most about him was his inquisitiveness. He wanted to know the answers to everything, and as one of his more patient seniors, I heard a lot of questions.

One weekend when he was home from Millbrook School and I from Smith College (we were both sophomores), he asked me so many questions about college life that, probably to shut him up, I said: "Bill, why don't you come up to Smith for a weekend and see for yourself?"

And so he did, and was transported at sharing the milieu of such worldly sophisticates as my 19-year-old friends and I. The weekend culminated in a wild toboggan ride at Mt. Tom, in Holyoke. Billy rode up front in the scariest position. At the end of the ride, red-cheeked and breathless, excited and happy, he insisted on buying us all hot chocolates.

Before he left Northampton he made me promise that when he was a college man, at Yale, I would spend a weekend with him, no matter how old I was. But it was not to happen. A world war intervened. So it was after six years, not three, and after Army service that Bill matriculated at Yale—by which time I was working round-the-clock shifts at United Press in New York, that Smith weekend a lifetime behind us.

Nearly ten years later, when I was with UP in Paris, the phone did ring. It was Bill (no longer Billy), inviting me to work at his newly founded NATIONAL REVIEW, the best invitation I ever received, the opening to a wondrous and fulfilling life, courtesy—as so much in so many peoples' lives—of my brother Bill.

Priscilla Buckley is a former managing editor and senior editor of NR.

Friend

ALISTAIR HORNE

IN an introduction to my *Small Earthquake in Chile* (1990), Bill wrote: "I have known the author a very long time and, since it is likelier he will write my obituary than I will write his (I smoke cigars), I see no reason to turn down this opportunity to write a few lines about him." I hoped most fervently that his prediction would never come to pass.

Bill was, quite simply, my oldest and dearest friend. Sixty-five years is a long time; in American-history terms, from Appomattox to the Great Depression. It all began, at Millbrook School, New York, in mutual political antipathy. He stood for isolationism; I, as a "bundle from Britain," for intervention against Hitler. In debate, he always won; then, with Pearl Harbor, all changed. We became roommates and best friends. He typed my essays, at prodigious speed, \$1 per thousand words; I fed

him jazz via an illegal homemade radio. We were united in revolt against authority. He welcomed me into the bosom of his wonderfully open-hearted family, in nearby Sharon, Conn. He became the brother I never had—and more.

Bill taught me the meaning of friendship. It never flagged; he was always there, always with his cheery "Hi, Al!" on the phone. I introduced him to skiing; he led me to Bach. I think I may have disappointed him: e.g., in not converting to Catholicism, in not following his conservatism all the way—and in not having my book on Henry Kissinger ready for him to read. But he never chided.

I sometimes pondered on what our friendship was based. Perhaps it was because there were 3,000 miles separating us. But possibly because we also had an unspoken acceptance of each other's essential loneliness. Strange, for someone so—perforce—gregarious, but I always



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felt that in Bill the speed of a phenomenal mind induced a certain isolation; to wit, his impatient urge to leave any dinner party by 10 P.M.

It was more than friendship; in his perpetual striving for excellence, Bill was a lifelong beacon. He wrote over 50 books, I some 20, but I doubt I would have written any if not for Bill's example and exhortation.

In our youths, we both venerated Antoine de Saint-Exupéry for his eloquence and carefree courage. In *Wind, Sand, and Stars* Saint-Exupéry wrote:

Thus is the earth at once a desert and a paradise. . . . Life may scatter us and keep us apart; it may prevent us from thinking very often of one another, but we know that our comrades are somewhere "out

Red Wing, My Red Wing

AN actor can get away with endorsing products, because an actor is, damn it, an actor. Ah, but this immunity cannot reasonably stretch to opinion salesmen. Like me. But this leaves a hole in the life of an evangelist. We come upon wonderful things, gadding about as we do. And it is hell to keep such things to oneself. But always, the opinion-monger must decline pay: and must specify that ads using his name make the point. But since this is full-disclosure time, I need to acknowledge that I have stretched the line. When I discovered the joys of Red Wing peanut butter I could not contain my excitement, and even traveled to Fredonia, New York, to inaugurate their new roaster. Ever since, every month, I receive six jars of Red Wing peanut butter, three creamy, three crunchy. They are for me what Checkers was for Richard Nixon. No one will take my Red Wing from me.

—WFB



there." . . . Bit by bit, nevertheless, it comes over us that we shall never again hear the laughter of our friend, that this one garden is forever locked against us. And at that moment begins our true mourning.

Yes—and no. I refuse to accept that this great spirit is not still "out there," somewhere. I shall hear his laughter and the "Hi, Al!" every remaining day of my life.

Mr. Horne is a British historian.

Mainstay

HENRY A. KISSINGER

WHEN Chris Buckley phoned me with the news, my first words were: "I cannot bear it." I was not thinking so much of the elegant, vibrant, articulate, witty public persona who shaped so much of our period; rather the gentle, tender, thoughtful friend who, by a kind fate, became a mainstay of my life.

Bill Buckley and I met 54 years ago when I asked him to write an article for a Harvard journal. Bill's contribution proved beyond the toleration of the editors, who had never encountered an actual conservative. Twenty years later, Bill introduced me on *Firing Line*—in the heyday of détente—with the words: "Henry Kissinger reminds me of an athlete who is being carried around the arena to the applause of the multitudes while someone else is winning the race."

It did not matter. By then Bill had become part of my life beyond conventional friendship. And what a blessing Bill's friendship was. It enveloped with a selfless solicitude and evoked a stream of encouraging messages, which were also educational since they usually contained some heretofore unfamiliar word. For example: "Congratulations on your article. The paragraph in the third column is really quite beautiful, giving that exhilaration that is distinctive to superb sorites." On another occasion, he commented on an essay: "I liked especially your treatment of the prophetic versus the contingent. I moved in that direction some years ago using paradigmatic and contingent. Yours is better. I am somewhat prophet-bound."

Throughout my life, Bill was an unobtrusive solace and support. His visit every Thanksgiving for 20 years became an integral part of our family tradition, eagerly awaited by my children. In our meetings, I never encountered the acerbic debating challenge of the public figure. Of course, he always remained distinctive: "The situation when you called me yesterday afternoon was a little awkward. I was seated at the piano practicing a duet with Alexandra Kimball when the inadequate cell phone was handed to me."

As the years went by, Bill's legendary resistance to medical advice became the principal issue between us. Occasionally, Bill reported a medical visit: "I may be able to run around the perimeter of your property to exhibit my endurance."

Alas, the ailments of age gained the upper hand, coupled, after Pat's death, with apparent resignation. Alistair Horne thought that Bill would not leave us so long as he had set himself an author's deadline. So he encouraged Bill's project of a book on Ronald Reagan.

I last saw Bill, by then quite frail, three weeks ago. Inevitably, the Reagan book came up. Bill had decided to change its focus. To avoid a sectarian debate about the nature of Reagan's conservatism, he would write about the Reagan he knew as a friend.

On the day before Bill died, he went to see his doctor, for once without any prompting.

The next morning, Bill parted from us while sitting at his desk, leaving a hole in our lives and having enhanced the glory of our nation and the nobility of the cause of freedom.

Mr. Kissinger is a former secretary of state.

Businessman

WILLIAM A. RUSHER

JOURNALS of opinion have never earned their way. Typically they have been subsidized by wealthy liberals and conservatives who believe, and are willing to invest their money, in their respective causes.

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assumption was that it would be subsidized by Bill Buckley's father, William F. Buckley Sr., who had made his fortune as an independent oil operator in Texas, Mexico, and Venezuela. And so it was. But the Buckleys, though wealthy, were no Rockefellers, and within a year or two it was plain that the magazine's appetite for cash was greater than the family was going to be able to sustain.

Where to turn? In those early years, NR had about 16,000 subscribers, and Bill sent each a letter outlining the problem. To our surprise and gratification, several thousand responded with contributions of the suggested amount—\$100. This tided us over for a year, and it soon became apparent that NATIONAL REVIEW could expect a similar amount of support from those readers each year for the foreseeable future.

That was the basis on which NR managed to survive, and so it is to this day. In this sense, Bill's magazine has been, almost from the start, a joint enterprise with its readers.

Mr. Rusher is a former publisher of NR.

Dazzler

JEFFREY HART

THE first time I saw Bill Buckley, in early 1955, I knew something was about to happen. Until then the

established idea of a conservative was Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio, a man of intellect and integrity but so lacking in charisma that he made Herbert Hoover look like Rudolph Valentino.

In 1955 I was stationed in the Naval Intelligence office in Boston but living in Cambridge near Harvard Yard. Buckley, then famous for *God and Man at Yale*, was scheduled to debate James Wechsler in the auditorium of Lamont Library. I managed to find a seat in the packed hall.

All heads turned when Buckley and his wife, Pat, walked down the center aisle. She was tall, carried a leopard-skin bag, and wore a large leopard-skin hat. She stole the show until Buckley's first remark after he was introduced.

"I see Professor Schlesinger there in the third row. His books would be dangerous if they weren't so boring." Above his bow tie Schlesinger didn't smile. But the auditorium full of Harvard students roared. They loved this effrontery.

This was Harvard, after all. Harvard! Where all the red bricks in the buildings and even the cracks in the pavement knew that Arthur was a Great Man. Buckley's aristocratic bravura dominated the "debate."

Wechsler never had a chance. I had not known that Buckley had been a champion debater at Yale. Wechsler was only the most recent victim.

Much later Buckley remarked of Wechsler that he was so perfectly pre-

dictable a specimen of the liberal that he should be on exhibition. On that evening at Harvard it became evident—no, spectacularly obvious—that this was no boring, green-eyeshade, Bob Taft conservatism. This was intelligent, surprising, and fun. Something was changing in the world, but we didn't know how much.

Mr. Hart is an NR senior editor.

The American Gentleman

PAUL JOHNSON

BILL BUCKLEY earned a special place in history by doing the original spadework in the reconstruction of American conservatism. But to me he was much more. Looking at him as an outsider and an Englishman, I saw him as the living archetype of a certain kind of civilized American—maturely educated, refined and polished in his address, always courteous, reserved in his emotions which were nonetheless deep and powerful, with a kind heart, a fastidious sense of humor, an inbred devotion to duty, and great courage. In short, he was the epitome of the American gentleman.

It was always a reassuring pleasure to be interviewed by Bill on television, that normally acerbic and distasteful medium. For he did not use the occasion to inflate his own ego, or score points, or display the clever tricks of the trade. On the contrary: He was a self-effacing and almost invisible presence, striving skillfully and persistently to draw out of you the best of what you had to say, and to give viewers something they would remember. So often you emerge from a TV studio feeling soiled. With Bill as host, you ended the program enhanced, exhilarated, a better person.

I felt he had the same gift in running NATIONAL REVIEW. As it was largely his creation, and for many years the chief beneficiary of his enormous energies and creative gifts, it could easily have become the mere projection of his personality, in which others were bit players. In fact, he always knew exactly when to retire

Truly First Class

How to abbreviate the experience of flying on MGM Grand Air? I have flown on Air Force One, have disported on the Concorde right around the world, on a dozen corporate jets, including a luxuriously appointed G-4 dispatched all the way to Geneva to bring me to Los Angeles. I depose that MGM's flights were five hours of unparalleled comfort. You could put in for the kind of seating arrangement that made the most sense for you. There were a half dozen chairs that converted to sleeperettes, if repose was what you most wanted. The attendants exactly contrived the art of staying away and being ubiquitous. Was it your imagination—or were the engines unusually quiet? We don't have much patience with failed enterprises in America, but those of us who had the experience of MGM take thought, some of us, to attend the memorial service, and profess our sadness at the passing of so civilized an enterprise.

—WFB



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behind the scenes and allow his staff and contributors to perform. Against all the odds, NR became a success, precisely because it was the means whereby a whole generation of new and serious writers was brought to the fore, reputations established and enhanced, and all men and women of talent and generous conservatism given opportunities to shine.

It was a team effort, but Bill was an inspired and noble leader. He always led from the front, but without bravado or posturing. He was firm but never tyrannical. He loved to encourage. There was not a trace of arrogance in him, though he had much to be proud of. He was proof that Acton's adage, "Power tends to corrupt," is not always true. Bill exercised a benign power for many years while keeping his intellectual and moral integrity intact. In

Joy on the Open Sea

AH, but the sea always has something lying in wait for you. Perhaps, in my last years, I'll deny it the opportunity to vex me. But if so, how can I draw from it those fleeting moments? You have shortened sail just a little, because you want more steadiness than you are going to get at this speed, the wind up to twenty-two, twenty-four knots, and it is late at night, and there are only two of you in the cockpit. You are moving at racing speed, parting the buttery sea as with a scalpel, and the waters roar by, themselves exuberantly subdued by your powers to command your way through them. Triumphalism . . . and the stars also seem to be singing together for joy.

—WFB



the words of Chaucer, who would surely have welcomed him as a transatlantic guest on his pilgrimage, "he was a very parfit gentle knight."

Mr. Johnson is a British journalist and historian.

Monosyllablist

MARK STEYN

ON the eve of the 2004 election, William F. Buckley Jr. was reflecting on criticism of the networks re the 2000 debacle in Florida. He noted that, in the wake of protests, the broadcasters had abandoned their old ways, in which "computers projected winners based on hygienic extrapolation." And then he added: "There ain't no extrapolation these days that will make the protesters go away."

We know Bill Buckley's the go-to guy for your "logical postulates" and whatnot. But "ain't" is a Buckley word, too—although I'm pretty certain that's the first time the English language ever had a need for the formulation "There ain't no extrapolation." There are chaps who use words like "extrapolation" and there are those who say "ain't" but not many who deploy both. Bill was one of the few, though he didn't always get credit for it. Even my old friend Conrad Black claimed that Bill was hopeless at Scrabble because he didn't know any words under eight letters—which is, in that game, where the real action is.

Oh, I don't know. Here he is, from 1996, with a good 'un of just three letters: "Phil Gramm did not wow them in New Hampshire."

Bill believed in *le mot juste*, and, if *le mot juste* was a vernacular monosyllable, that was what he'd type. I once had a long conversation with him about Romano Mussolini—the late Duce's son—who became a moderately successful pianist on the Italian jazz circuit. We were discussing the reaction of folks when learning of Romano's pedigree. Bill had been told by Carroll O'Connor of dining with a pal at some joint Mussolini was playing, and the chum said to the pianist, "Hell of a thing they did to your father." And I reported to Bill a similar story: The trumpeter Chet Baker, a characteristic jazzman

existing in a swirl of music and drugs and barely aware what continent he was on, had been playing with the Mussolini group in Italy a few weeks before it was pointed out to him who Romano's pop was. He knew enough to feel obliged to say something. "Gee, it's a drag about your old man," he commiserated.

"That's a better line," said Bill appreciatively, and repeated the phrase in his dulcet tones: "Gee, it's a drag about your old man." Again, *les mots justes*. He was not the languid drawler of effete polysyllables portrayed in too many eulogies. For how, in a democratic republic whose public discourse is conducted in the demotic, could such a man have had any influence? He was a man who was interested in making things happen. Thus the Buckley combination: He could do the extrapolation, and then figure out how to use it. Ain't that the trick?

Mr. Steyn is an author and critic.

Candidate

NEAL B. FREEMAN

WHEN I reflect on the famous mayoral victory of 1965, I think first not of Bill's wit and grace and charm, all of which have been justly celebrated, but of his courage, both physical and moral. In those days, people who stirred passions in the public arena tended to attract not just criticism but gunfire. John Kennedy, George Wallace, Martin Luther King—it wasn't so much their brand of politics as the intensity of their campaigns that made them targets. And the Buckley campaign was nothing if not high-intensity. I kept a file of the threats, but Bill was never interested.

For the other part, moral courage, Bill was pretty much on his own. Of the dozens of great lines he coined for the bedazzlement of the media, one popped out on the sidewalk next to the old *New York Times* building on Times Square. Asked how he felt after leaving his session with the editorial board, he replied: "I feel as if I've just passed through the Berlin Wall." Lifeless today, the jape, in context, had snap and crackle. There really was a Berlin Wall in those days, and people were getting shot while trying to

Bill Buckley
was a giant of
an educated man.
He lived his life
to the fullest,
inspiring others.
History will not soon
forget how he changed
our lives and our country
with the power of
an insightful pen
and
“Firing Line.”

Roger Milliken
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climb over it. And when Bill confronted the editorial board, he was not arguing the relative merits of covering 92 percent or 96 percent of the populace with some leviathan insurance scheme. He was proposing to uproot the Establishment, cast it aside and replace it with something better. The *Times*'s editorial board, sitting at the epicenter of that Establishment, was in full self-preservation mode: They had met the enemy and they were determined to destroy him. It was tense in there. But just as there are certain saloons that only John Wayne could pacify, there are certain liberal bunkers that only Bill Buckley could bemuse.

The literalists among you will still be hung up on that word "victory." How could a 13 percent, third-place finish be called a victory? I count the ways. First, Bill pulled the nascent conservative movement out of the ditch of its post-Goldwater malaise. Second, he spawned a genuinely new political creature that took full form only 15 years later: Those Buckleyite cops and firemen and shop owners and outer-borough stay-at-home moms were the first sighting of what later became known as Reagan Democrats. Third, his diapasonic proposals, pro-

nounced "fringe" and "extreme" by the *Times*, have been adopted almost entirely by subsequent New York City administrations. Fourth, Bill produced the best book ever written about a political campaign, *The Unmaking of a Mayor*. Fifth, the campaign made Bill a star, and he leveraged his new media omnipresence into moral authority of national scope. He was now in a position to *define* conservatism.

And finally, Bill catapulted a generation of young people into lives of new possibility and achievement. Many I haven't seen in decades. But I do know what happened to a volunteer named Jane Metze, described by a besotted *Times* reporter as a "honey blonde with an oozy voice." She married the campaign manager and lived happily ever after.

As for the candidate? Well, he was God's gift.

Mr. Freeman, who managed WFB's campaign, is a former director of NR.

Improviser

PETER ROBINSON

ON the air from 1966 until WFB himself brought it to a close in 1999—"The end of the millennium," he said, "kind of makes sense"—*Firing Line* was the longest-running program in television history whose host never changed. How did a cerebral show devoted to policy and culture set such a record?

I was twice a guest, sat in the control room during several tapings, and pored over scores of transcripts to help WFB edit his 1989 book, *On the Firing Line*. Here is what I learned.

As a guest: Before the cameras rolled, WFB would offer his interviewees a moment or two of small talk, not a briefing. Although he would have looked over a stack of research, he would have committed to his clipboard only a few notes. When he received his cue, WFB would swivel to the camera to read his introduction, the one item he would always have typed word for word, then swivel

to you to ask the first question. You would reply as best you could. WFB would spend the rest of the hour making it up.

Spontaneity, freshness, unpredictability. WFB was to television what Louis Armstrong was to the trumpet: a master of sustained improvisation.

In the control room: Watching WFB from different angles on an array of screens, what struck you was how totally he commanded the frame. The blue eyes, the slouch, the boyish disarray of the hair, the crooked grin, the way his gaze would seem to drift into the middle distance, then suddenly pinion his guest—all proved visually enthralling. If he had been born in the 19th century, when print remained the only medium, or come of age during the first decades of the 20th century, when radio remained ascendant, WFB would still have attained fame. But his gifts fit television precisely.

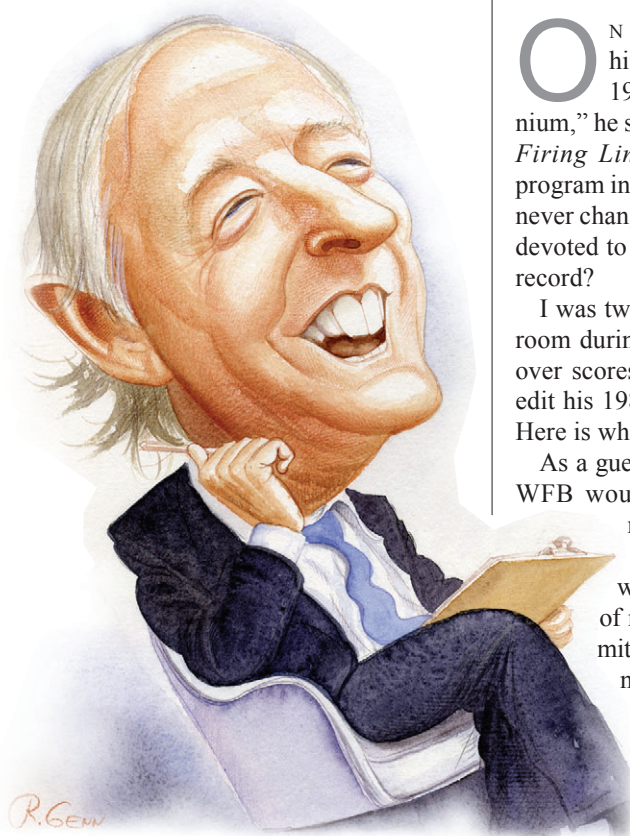
Editing *On the Firing Line*: I realized that the show's secret lay in a paradox. On one hand, WFB approached it with a sense of high purpose; he believed that television could offer instruction and inspiration. On the other, he could hardly have taken more pleasure in *Firing Line* if it had been a sporting event. Norman Mailer, Muhammad Ali, Milton Friedman, Margaret Thatcher, John Kenneth Galbraith—WFB reveled in his encounters with each. One evening we watched a tape of his 1978 debate with Ronald Reagan on the Panama Canal. He offered a running commentary, his face alight with pleasure, noting how Reagan, in so many ways his opposite—so plainspoken and so apparently unsophisticated—had nevertheless proven so effective. "Ronnie," WFB said, chuckling with admiration, "was good."

Mr. Robinson is a research fellow at the Hoover Institute.

Star

MICHAEL KINSLEY

FIRING LINE was usually taped, three shows at a time, at the HBO studios in New York. The format evolved over the years. Toward



I mean to live my life an obedient man, but obedient to God, subservient to the wisdom of my ancestors; never to the authority of political truths arrived at yesterday at the voting booth.

—William F. Buckley Jr., *Up From Liberalism*, 1959

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.



Bill Buckley receives The Heritage Foundation's Clare Boothe Luce Award, its highest honor for exemplifying conservative ideals, from Heritage President Ed Feulner. He is flanked by son Christopher and sister Priscilla during the ceremony Oct. 20, 1999.

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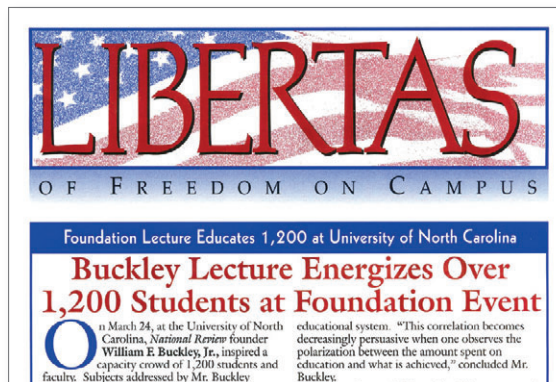
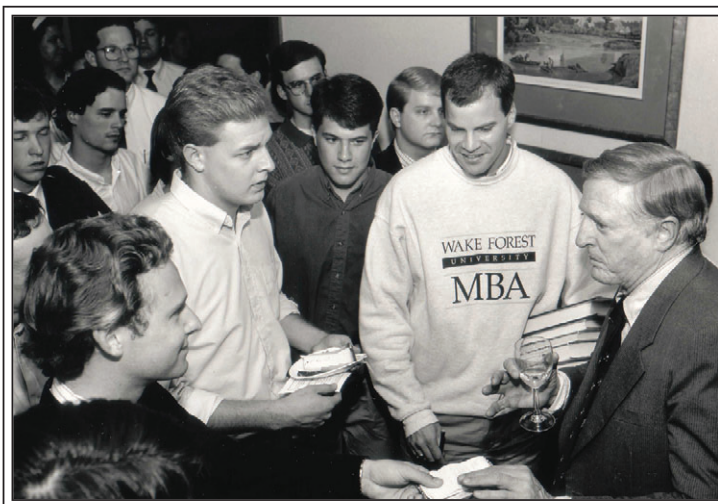
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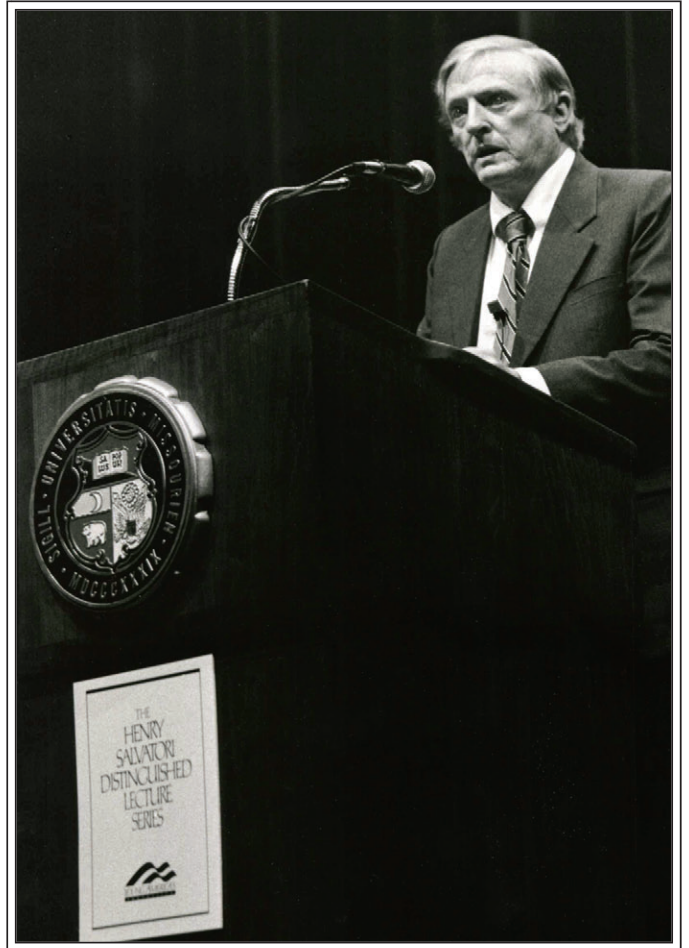


“On the matter of your lecture series, these are experiences of infinite importance. As recently as last night, a 42-year old affluent influential conservative told an audience of 400 people that his orientation came from hearing such a talk (yes, by me) at Cornell when he was a sophomore. So I do hope that your important Foundation will be able to continue to support such appearances in the years ahead.”

— William F. Buckley Jr.

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the end, my role was to introduce the show and then throw to Bill, Ed McMahon to his Johnny Carson. Sometimes I got to ask a question or two at the end. Nervous, I usually got there an hour or two early and hid in an empty corridor, reviewing my notes.

As the taping time approached, word of Bill's progress toward the studio would circulate. *He's in the car, he's five minutes away . . .* The producer-director, Warren Steibel, would start displaying behavior that inspired legiti-

The Most Beautiful Dogs

I HAVE never understood why, when there are beautiful dogs one can acquire, people should go out of their way to acquire non-beautiful dogs. I know better than to give an example, because nothing arouses owners more than the suggestion that their breed is less than the most desirable in the world. But admit it, Cavalier King Charles Spaniels are strikingly attractive. And just as one feels the impulse to stroke them, they feel the impulse to be stroked. Sam and Fred can spend hours being fondled, as you read your book, or talk to your guest. But then they will exhibit their independence. It disappoints me only that they do not like my study. Rowley used to come to my study once every hour or so, to have an extended love-in, during which we would re-exchange our eternal vows. Sam and Fred will accompany me to my study, and then leave, to play elsewhere: or simply to lie in the kitchen, or, preferably—always, if she is there—with Pat.

—WFB



mate concern about his heart. About three minutes before the taping was to begin, Bill would appear in a great cyclone of energy, clutching his clipboard and a pile of papers, and head straight into make-up.

An emissary would track me down in my hiding place and say, "Bill needs to talk with you." As he got coated with greasepaint, Bill would greet me with his famous canary-eating grin and a "How are you, my friend?" Then he would ask me to do or not to do something in connection with one of the shows that day: ask a particular question, avoid a particular topic. He treasured the conceit that I would be doing him a special favor by adhering to this request, as if it were my show and not his.

The first guest would already be on the set, waiting. Bill would rush in and say hello, the Second Brandenburg Concerto would start, the audience of old ladies bused in from an adult day-care center in one of the outer boroughs would go silent, and we were off.

In the control room, Warren would be putting on an operatic performance of his own, which I could hear through my earphone while Bill was conducting his interview.

"Camera three: close-up on Bill. NO, NO, NO, on BILL. I SAID ON BILL. What the #*\$! is wrong with you? Michael, don't you think this woman, whatever her name is, is pretty good? NO! Wait, okay, Camera Two. Now Camera Three . . . CAMERA THREE, CAMERA THREE. JESUS CHRIST! Michael, I'm thinking of giving myself the title 'Executive Producer.' What do you think? CAMERA TWO, CAMERA TWO, close-up on the lady . . . Oh, that's perfect, thank you."

Bill kept a large stopwatch attached to his clipboard and was skilled at ending each show with a good line at exactly 27 minutes and 42 seconds, or whatever the number was. The first guest would be ushered off, the second ushered in, cue the Brandenburg and we were off. A third show—and then, in seconds, Bill would be gone, on to his next project or adventure, without even stopping to remove his makeup.

Mr. Kinsley is the founding editor of *Slate*.

The Rebuke dans l'escalier

TOM WOLFE

WHY does no one mention the subtlest of all Buckley's rhetorical ploys, the rebuke *dans l'escalier*? Beats me. It was such beautiful stuff. Everybody is familiar with *l'esprit de l'escalier*. Some smug wit has cut you to the quick in repartee before an entire room, but it is only now, hours later, as you climb the stairs, *l'escalier*, to go to bed that you hit upon the withering comeback your poor brain was churning so desperately to find at the time. But in the rebuke *dans l'escalier* it is only now, hours later, as you climb the stairs to go to bed, that you even realize you've been skewered.

I'll give you an example. I was serving as the interviewee for one of a series of audiotapes Buckley was recording for the humanistic nourishment of physicians. (Please, don't even bother asking.) We were in a moldering sound studio in the crumbling WeVar (west of Varick Street) section of New York. Buckley is about three minutes into the interview when a voice from inside a glass booth says over a speaker system, "Oh, for chrissake . . . Stop!" Weary sigh. "You gotta start over! You gotta try again."

Buckley looked toward the glass booth. He parted his lips and began tapping his front teeth with a ballpoint pen. With a certain icily languid delivery of his—in an accent precisely—but *precisely*—like Prince Charles's, he said, "The imperative you present is debatable, but that you won't do it again is the given."

The imperative you present is debatable, but that you won't do it again is the given. To tell the truth, I didn't really get it. I reckon the man in the booth didn't, either. Yet the malignant odor of a figure of speech known as charientism stole throughout the studio—and not another word was heard from the man in the glass booth until Buckley completed the session.

The next morning I wondered how far up the stairs the poor guy had made it last night before he realized he was bleeding.

Mr. Wolfe is a novelist and culture critic.

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A screenshot of the Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs at Ashland University website. The page features a navigation bar with links to 'scholar program', 'publications', 'audio archive', 'donate', and 'about us'. The main content area is divided into several sections, each with a callout box highlighting a specific program or resource.

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- NoLeftTurns Blog:** A callout pointing to the 'No Left Turns: The Ashbrook Center Blog' link in the left sidebar.
- You Americans Podcast:** A callout pointing to the 'You Americans' podcast link in the 'Podcast Index' section.
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- Mark Hullung** on the Social Contract
Friday, April 18
- Amity Shlaes** on How 1938 Gave Us 2008
Monday, April 28
- Tony Snow**
Thursday, May 29

Recent Publication

- Barack Obama and the Tyranny of the Majority**
by Joseph M. Knippenberg
- The Warrior and the Preacher**
by Peter Augustine Lawler
- McCain Appeal**
by Mackubin T. Owens
- Barack Obama: A Faithful Democrat**
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- No South Carolina Embrace of McCain**
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Husband

DANIEL OLIVER

I MET Bill and Pat in 1965, when Bill was running for mayor of New York, and I learned then that they had a wonderful time “winding each other up,” as the Brits say. One night during the campaign, Bill was writing a speech at dinner (!) in the upper room of a restaurant. Nearby, a huge crowd of Buckley fans was waiting to hear it delivered. He typed away on his Olivetti, surrounded by utensils and piles of yellow paper. Bill wrote something about Eleanor Roosevelt, who, he said, “certainly took her own time dying.” As he finished each page, he passed it around the table for us on the campaign team to look at, and when that one got to Pat, she screamed, in that way we got to know and love, “*BIHILL! YOU CAN’T SAY THAT!*” If there had been any doubt in Bill’s mind, *that* removed it. The line stayed in, and when he read it, the crowd exploded.

A quarter century later, they were still at it. In 1991 my wife and I and two of our children stayed with Bill and Pat at the chateau in Rougemont, Switzerland, that they rented each winter for years. We were living in Paris, and I had asked Bill if we could bring our daughter Susie’s cat with us. It was to be a clandestine op: The cat would be kept in a closet in our room, the staff under strict instructions from WFB not to say a word to Pat, who loved dogs, and *only* dogs. At breakfast the morning we were leaving, Bill turned to Susie and with a huge grin and said, “Susie, how’s your little pussycat?” Pat produced exactly the reaction Bill had desired. I feared the exhaust from Rocket Pat would spoil the skiing in Gstaad for weeks.

And then there was the dinner with Mayor Bloomberg four or five years ago. This time Pat was having the fun. She lit into the mayor, cutting off his arguments at every turn. Bill was reduced to saying, “Er, Ducky, I think what the mayor was trying to say—”

“*BIHILL, I CAN HEAR WHAT HE’S SAYING!*”

“—was only—”

“*BIHILL, WHY ARE YOU SUPPORTING HIS RIDICULOUS POSITION?*”

“—that—”

“*BIHILL!*”

But Pat was right, and she had the mayor behaving like an asymptote looking for a straight line.

Such love. Such fun. She packed his bags when he went traveling. She packed his picnics when he went driving. She looked after his clothes. She ran the menage. Such fun. Such love.

Mr. Oliver is a senior director at the White House Writers Group.

Ski Buddy

TAKI THEODORACOPULOS

THE winters seemed longer then, the slopes much whiter and the weather sunnier. This was Gstaad around 1960, and I had run into the Buckleys during a Palace Bar altercation with Alistair Horne over a fascist song about youth. Pat thought it hilarious to invite me to dinner at their famous chateau. Bill, too, was having a whale of a laugh when Alistair warned him about the dangerous fascist he had just let into his house. Needless to say the three of us went skiing the next morning and that was that.

The great event back then was the Buckley Family Race Day, held in the Hornberg’s sunny and not-too-difficult slopes over the course of a day. Bill’s ski guide—the very young Anita, now a grandmother—would pick a slope and put

up some poles, we’d ski through them while she timed us, and so on. At the end we’d all retire to the chateau and Bill would read out the results. Every Buckley had to race, and that included a non-Buckley Greek. (Who won it every year to great boos by a teenage Christo, who also shed tears over the beauty that was my first wife.)

Bill was a strong skier, braver than he was good, but deep snow puzzled him as much as liberalism. He would name a “Führer”—usually Van Galbraith or myself—and blindly follow, oblivious to snow conditions or perilous slopes. I can still hear him laughing when Alistair Horne fell into a tiny crevasse just as he told me he was monogamous. “The Almighty must have heard you, Al . . .” The great times, of course, were had at the chateau, especially after dinner, when everyone was obliged to paint. David Niven was good, Ted Kennedy less so. (The senator painted a bridge, but it was before Chappaquiddick.) Bill’s friends were Swiss denizens such as Vladimir Nabokov, Natasha Stewart, Yehudi Menuhin, David Niven, Roger Moore, John Kenneth Galbraith, and so on. Gstaad was small, beautiful, and cozy. We skied early, lunched in the sun in some mountain inn, drank a lot of wine, skied some more, and, while I went gambling at the Palace, Bill wrote a few books, played the harpsichord, wrote a few columns, taped a few shows, ran for mayor, and, well, you know the rest.



Pleasure on Skis

I DON’T know why, but it is unfailingly the case that there is *always* something to relate after an afternoon’s ski. The ski tow stopped halfway up the hill. *You were stranded for twenty minutes!* An avalanche over on the left, where you usually ski, had hurtled down the night before, very nearly ambushing your former ski instructor! Skiing is always doing that kind of thing to you. As though nature begrudged any absolutely uninterrupted day of sheer joy sliding down the mountain at any speed you choose, treating the snow like hired gravity as it lets you glide over its softness, cooling your face and balm your spirit and reminding you day after day and year after year of the singular pleasure that issues from a mountain height, two simple planes of tough springy texture, and snow under your feet. One wonders what we would have had from Coleridge and Wordsworth and Keats if only they had been given what we take for granted.

—WFB



In Memoriam

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.

NOVEMBER 24, 1925 - FEBRUARY 27, 2008

STUART HOLZER

PHILIP HOLZER

Bill, who gave me my start and to whom I owe everything, treated the famous exactly the same way he treated the locals: with smiling grace. I shall miss him as I now miss those wonderful carefree winter days and nights when we were all in the springtime of our lives.

Mr. Theodoracopoulos co-founded
The American Conservative.

The Boss

MONA CHAREN

Now that Bill has met God, he'll have some idea of how I felt when I met *him*. I joined the staff of NR in 1979, the year I finished college. Bill was in his early 50s and his "cruising speed" was about 500 miles per hour. Who was that traipsing down the hall? A *60 Minutes* camera crew. Who was waiting downstairs? A Nobel Prize winner come for lunch. Where is Bill today? London, Antarctica? Who's calling? Johnny Carson? Margaret Thatcher? Alexander Hamilton?

It would have been dizzying just to observe. But Bill drew everyone in. Even a lowly editorial assistant was permitted to write for the magazine—under the careful discipline of Bill's red pen. NR was not for the faint-hearted. One of my early efforts came downstairs with "Needs a cold shower" written in red ink across the top.

Bill had the capacity to make all of us feel that we were delightful to him. If you chanced to run into him on the stairway or in the hall, he would break into the widest grin in the Western hemisphere and greet you as if this meeting were all he needed to cap his day.

Some of my happiest memories are of times when I made Bill laugh. In 1985, NR was celebrating its 30th anniversary. I was working in the White House and penned the following memo to my boss in hopes of catching a ride with the president, who was attending the gala. It read: "I'm asking for a perk. As you know, my first job out of college was at NATIONAL REVIEW. When I joined the editorial staff in 1979, Carter was in the White House, inflation was running at about 17 percent, our national defense and international prestige were both at all-time lows, and SAT scores were

falling. By the time I left the staff in 1981, SAT scores were on the rise, inflation was down around 9 percent, our national defense was being restored, and Ronald Reagan was in the White House. I never asked for any thanks. It's just not my way. All I want is a seat on Air Force One when the president flies up to New York to attend NR's 30th-anniversary dinner."

I didn't wind up getting that ride on the president's plane, but I did get Bill's delighted reply—"I found your memo so irresistible that I very nearly dismissed Priscilla from the staff when she told me I couldn't publish it"—and that was worth so much more!

Mona Charen is a syndicated columnist.

Egalitarian

GARRY WILLS

IN Bill's public appearances, people saw a snooty aloofness—his acting *de haut en bas*, as he would put it. But in

private he was the most egalitarian person I ever met. He treated everyone equally, with equal dignity. When I submitted an article to NATIONAL REVIEW "over the transom" in 1957, he called me at the dorm where I was attending summer classes and asked me to visit him in New York when the session ended.

I checked my suitcase at LaGuardia, since I thought I might fly back out that night, and took a cab to the magazine office. He greeted me, an unknown student, as if I were some important visitor, introduced me around, and asked me to stay while he finished up for the day. Then he drove me back to LaGuardia to pick up my bag, and to Stamford, for dinner and a long talk.

He was curious about my studies and let me do most of the talking. Then he drove me back to New York, put me up in his father's suite at 80 Park Avenue, and drove himself back to Stamford. It was the kind of courtesy I saw him show numberless others. There was never any "side" (as he again might say). To everyone he was instantly "Bill," not "Mr. Buckley." He



ROMAN GEN

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

INTERCOLLEGIATE STUDIES INSTITUTE

55 Years of Friendship



IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that ISI marks the passing of William F. Buckley Jr. Before going on to found *National Review* and so to emerge as the leading public figure in America's conservative revival, Buckley served briefly as ISI's first president in 1953–4. He had then already risen to public notice as the author of *God and Man at Yale* (1951), a book which illuminated the pressing need for an organization like ISI. Buckley remained a close friend of the Institute his whole life. His wit, intelligence, energy, and tremendous capacity for friendship will be sorely missed.



Top left: Signing copies of Up from Liberalism at an ISI summer school in 1960. Top right: With ISI staff and trustees in the early 1960s. Bottom left: Addressing ISI students in 1960. Bottom right: With Russell Kirk at an ISI event in 1978.

did not ask to receive favors but to do them. He was the most generous person on earth.

It always puzzled me that others were puzzled when I said Bill genuinely liked people, all people. He wanted them around him, the more the merrier. He was happiest when he could share people's company on an extended basis, as on any of his sailboats. When I was with him—at his homes in Stamford and New York, on his boat, in his hotel room in Ireland or Bermuda—he would often say he had to write his column. I naturally made a

At Home, Wallacks Point

ONE watches, and says very little, when the lady of the house is pursuing a vision. The sun room soon became the boudoir the Shah couldn't afford. Then the living room, a kind of Haitian concentrate. Self-respect required me at one point to insist on a room of my own—a music room, featuring a beautiful harpsichord, and the worst keyboard artist since Harry Truman. I got as far as the windows and the paintings (they are all by the fine Raymond de Botton); but She took over, which is why the room—its window framing the garden, a slender tree trunk trained like a geisha girl from childhood to give pleasure, the largest wild apple tree *our* tree man has ever seen, and out there Long Island Sound, with as many moods as those ersatz fountains the big hotels are constructing, with the Teamster Aeolus, who will blow you up a storm, or whisper the sea into kitten-like placidity—is correspondingly beautiful on the inside. There in the winter, the fireplace alight, a proper musician performing, live or on record, you can see what the pilgrims saw, as if under glass, and understand the compulsion to thanksgiving.

—WFB

motion to withdraw, but he would ask me to stay, and he kept talking on and off while typing. He was like Samuel Johnson in his craving for company. At his home in Manhattan, rather than call a cab to take me back to my hotel, he would give me a ride back on his motor scooter.

He did not want the conversation to end—it is a dark day now that it has ended.

Mr. Wills is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and historian.

Giver

EDWARD CAPANO

WHEN I began working at NATIONAL REVIEW in December 1960 as a part-time college student, I had yet to meet Bill Buckley. Then one afternoon I got summoned to his office—not only to meet the great man, but to do him a favor. Bill needed someone to take his Nash Rambler and pick up a friend of his, Sir Arnold Lunn (the gentleman who invented slalom skiing, which he introduced to the 1936 Olympics), at the airport and drive him to meet Bill in Connecticut. Then I was to drive Sir Arnold back to New York. For performing this task I was to receive the (then) princely sum of \$50, money I very much needed. It was the beginning of a beautiful 45-year friendship with Bill.

Bill was truly one of nature's noblemen. He was also a man of a deep and unshakable religious faith, which was manifested by his Christian charity: doing for others whatever he could, whenever he could, with no one ever knowing about it. There was the Vietnam veteran blinded by shrapnel who wrote to Bill asking him if there was a Braille edition of NR. There wasn't—but Bill flew the young man to New York to visit one of the leading ophthalmologists. The operation was successful, and restored enough of the young man's vision to enable him to navigate without the usual aids. The story has an even happier ending: The vet married the nurse who took care of him.

Then there was the production editor who lived in a two-bedroom apartment and whose wife was expecting their third

child. He came to a meeting one day with a picture of a house he had a chance to buy. Bill looked at the picture and asked the editor if he was going to buy the house. The editor sheepishly replied that he didn't have the money for the down payment. A few days later Bill's secretary came to the editor with a personal check from Bill for the down payment, with a promissory note to pay him whenever. That editor was me.

Working for and with Bill over so many years was a blessing. He was not only a friend but a mentor. He taught me that you always treat people the way you wanted to be treated—with respect and dignity. He did that in spades. Bill also had a keen sense of humor and appreciated that same characteristic in others. He loved to laugh and to hear others laugh—which was always evident, as laughter constantly echoed through the offices at NR.

I will miss him dearly. He is with the angels now, praying for all of us to join him but, as he would add, not anytime soon.

Mr. Capano is a former publisher of NR.

The Irrepressible

LINDA BRIDGES

ERLE STANLEY GARDNER, the creator of Perry Mason, is said to have kept four secretaries busy at once taking his novels in dictation and transcribing them. That wasn't Bill's story, but only because he kept his book-writing to an average of less than one a year (and typed his own first drafts). But at the long height of his career—roughly, the *Firing Line* years, 1966 to 1999—Buckley Diversified kept far more than four people busy: a secretary; one, sometimes two, typists; and four researchers (shared with NATIONAL REVIEW)—not to mention the NR staff, the *Firing Line* production staff, and a driver so that he could work in the car while going from place to place.

And these weren't neat, 9-to-5 jobs. In the glory years, he would occasionally wake his secretary with a 3 A.M. phone call from, say, Copenhagen asking her to change his next day's plane reservation. There were no wee-hours phone calls in



God and Man in Heaven. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Shirley & Banister
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

recent years. But if he finished revising a draft of his current book on Friday, it wasn't exactly that he told his assistant (by that time, yours truly) to work all weekend—it was just that he wanted the clean copy ready to distribute to publisher, agent, and a couple of friends by the following Thursday, and there was only one way to do that.

Nor was it that the publisher had said: Get it to me Thursday or our contract is off. It was Bill's self-imposed deadline—his own way of keeping himself from lingering overlong on one project and not moving on to the next.

So why did people who worked for Bill tend to stay with him forever? Fortunately, if you were a conservative, and were not a puritan, you were under no compulsion to sort out to what extent your reward was the sense of duty fulfilled in helping him foster the conservative movement, and to what extent it was the pleasure of his exuberant, unpredictable company. Even though you often had to run to keep up with him—physically (as in crossing Third Avenue on the way between the office and his beloved Paone's Restaurant) or intellectually (as in every time you spent an hour working out something that he had grasped immediately)—he never made you feel stupid or slow. If you didn't know a thing, he would teach you: whether it was accent marks in Spanish, or commands in WordStar—the old DOS word-processing program that he held on to till the end, because it had SmartKey, and do you know how many keystrokes SmartKey saves you every day?

I still, when the phone rings, half expect it to be Bill, saying, "Now, Sweetie, have you finished those revisions? And do I have a date with Peter Flanigan next Tuesday? Oh, and when are you going skiing?"

As Ronald Reagan put it, "Thanks, Bill, for all the fun."

Linda Bridges is an NR editor-at-large.

A Second Father

RUSH LIMBAUGH

AT about age 13 I became mesmerized by Bill Buckley's column in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. His intellect and good humor literally created my desire to learn. But in my first year of college I flunked Speech 101 (I refused to outline). At age 20 I told my dad the worst news he could hear: "I'm quitting school." Having come through the Great Depression, he believed that without a college degree I had no chance of getting a good job.

"I want to be like Bill Buckley," I told him. "I want to be able to sit around and write and think."

My dad, perhaps the most brilliant man I ever knew intimately, gave me a two-hour lecture on how hard and time-consuming achievement is: "When you see someone's output but don't see what goes into it, you can make the mistake of assuming it comes easy to them, especially those who are great at what they do. They make it look so easy you think

you can do it, too." My dad was right about that.

While a DJ in Pittsburgh, I started working on my vocabulary, trying to acquire as much knowledge as I could. I developed a halfway decent impersonation of Mr. Buckley, and, as he might say, "I was reading omnivorously and voluminously." Especially NATIONAL REVIEW.

When I started my radio show in New York in 1988, I profusely commented on Buckley and quoted him and NR. Not long after, I was invited to a gathering of NR's editors at Mr. Buckley's apartment, the *maisonette* on Park Avenue. When the day arrived, I had my driver circle the block four times while I mustered the courage to get out of the car and go in.

That night I was made to feel welcome in the "conservative movement" by its leader. Eventually he became a confidant and a friend and an adviser; it was just like having another father. In fact, I embarrassed him the first time I had him and some guests for dinner at my New York apartment in 1996. Over brandy and cigars, I stood and gave Bill a toast: "My father passed away in 1990, but my dad is still alive here with me; Bill, you're here." Embarrassed, he looked around, he looked at Pat, he got choked up. I said, "I see you tearing up, but it's true."

Despite all his genius, Bill Buckley was very humble, and I think he wasn't prepared for something like that. But the truth is, I consider him a Founding Father. I still marvel whenever I read anything he wrote. I always will.

Mr. Limbaugh hosts a syndicated talk-radio show.

Hooked on the Latin Mass

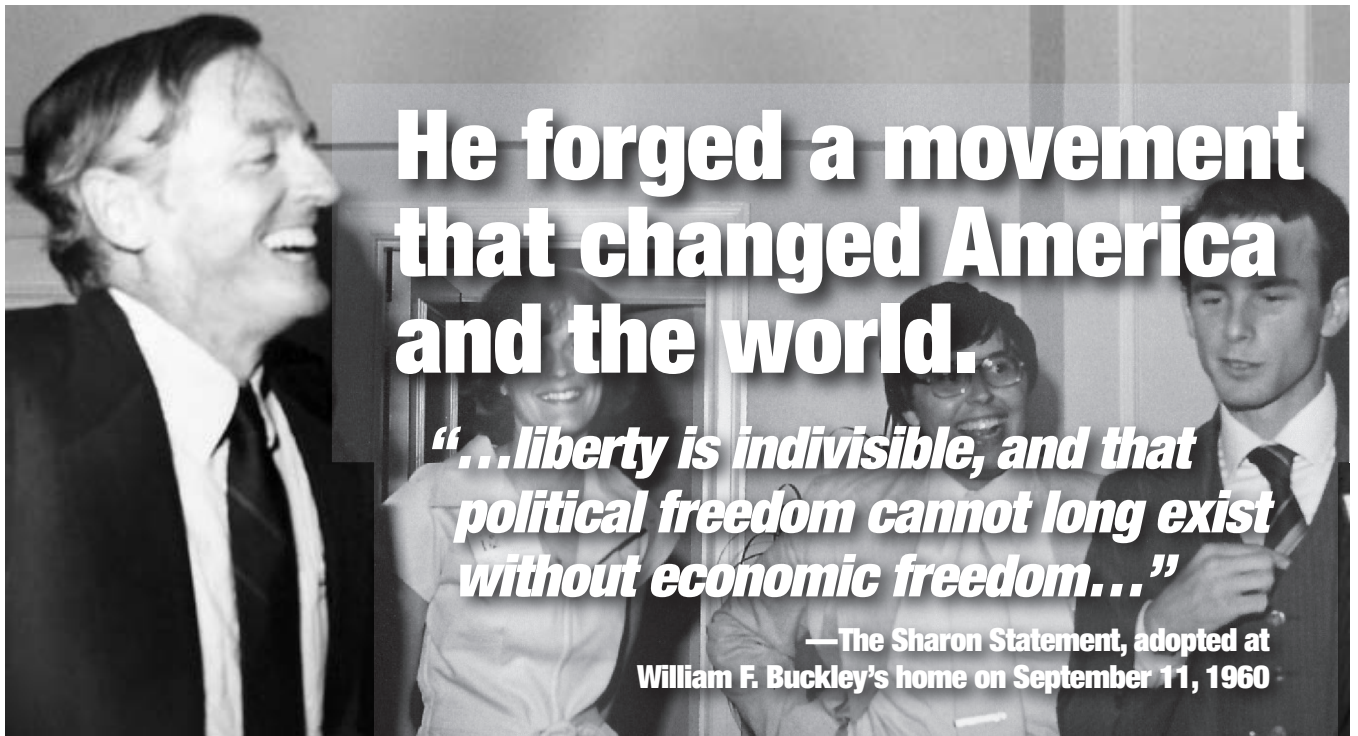
IHAVE always been impatient, and so it was I suppose surprising that I came so quickly to feel at ease with the daily Mass, becoming progressively more engrossed in the words and the ritual. The liturgy took hold of me, and I suppose that this means nothing more than that liturgy has theatrical properties. Yes, but something more, I reasonably supposed, and suppose so now. Thirty years later I would write a scorching denunciation of the changes authorized by Vatican II and of the heartbreakingly awful English translations that accompanied the jettisoning of the Latin. The Mass, in Latin, had got to me. They say about alcoholics that they are never "cured." I am a senior citizen and my faith has never left me, and I must suppose that Fr. Sharkey and Fr. Paine and Fr. Manning had something to do with it. They, and the closeness I felt, every morning, to the mystical things that were taking place at the altar.

—WFB

Mets Fan

IRA GLASSER

IN late 1993, during the course of an interview with Charlie Rose, Bill confessed to never having attended a baseball game. Regarding this as un-American, I wrote to tell him that he was lucky the House Un-American Activities Committee had been abolished, for surely he would have been called to account were they still in business.



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Friends,

As a key founder of Young Americans for Freedom, William F. Buckley created a training ground for some of our nation's most influential elected officials and leaders of the conservative movement. His vision produced the most energetic vanguard of the right that is still active throughout America today.

Mr. Buckley was everything a conservative should be: erudite, witty and—most important of all—kind and generous. In the words of one friend, Mr. Buckley was “one of the most decent, wonderful men” he had ever met.

We send our thoughts and prayers to the Buckley family.
Godspeed, Mr. Buckley.

Sincerely,

Erik Johnson

YAF National Chairman

Young Americans for Freedom

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I also offered a remedy: I told him I would be willing to take him to a baseball game and that I was the best possible person with whom to attend one's first game. The following April we attended the Opening Day game between the Mets and the Cubs.

He told me he would pick me up in his limousine, but I explained that we didn't go to baseball games that way, and that we would be taking the subway. After a tussle, he complied; he told me it was the only time he had been on the subway except for a ceremonial appearance during his 1965 mayoral adventure.

He asked me how he should dress. I told him sailing hats on the No. 7 train

Wine in the Blood

ONCE, for insurance purposes, my father brought in a French oenologist to assess his cellar. The Frenchman spent a half hour surveying the wines, taking notes. After he was done he came up to my father's study and said solemnly, "Your wine is valueless."

"Oh?" my father said. "I have thought it very fine wine."

"That's what I said," the expert replied. "*Valueless!*" It was with some relief that it dawned on us what a Frenchman can do in search of the English word "priceless."

After Father's death, our consolation was prolonged. Year after year, for over twenty years, whenever we gathered at Great Elm, we would be served the wines Father had accumulated, those lovely things that had slept peacefully, gaining flavor and enhancing their power to delight, through a world war and several occupations. It is a wonderful way to remember one's benefactors, isn't it? To drink wine in their memory?

—WFB



might expose him to derision, if not danger, but a baseball cap would be good. He said he didn't own any. I sent him a brand-new Mets cap—and a Cubs cap too, explaining the political ramifications of each. He chose the Mets cap, and I have a photo of the two of us at the game to prove it. I wore a Brooklyn Dodgers cap in order to explain still further the connection between baseball, character, and politics.

Baseball is complicated: Each rule has several exceptions—and the strategically critical choices, as in chess, often present themselves in the interstices between the action. Bill's ability to grasp even the simplest aspects of the game proved insufficient. Early on, I explained the intricacies of the sacrifice bunt, and he seemed to get it. But then, near the end of the game, when the Mets, behind several runs, loaded the bases with two outs, Bill turned to me and asked: "Would this be a good time for a sacrifice bunt?" I saw that my explanation had proved elusive to his otherwise formidable intellect, as so many of my explanations of civil liberties had.

We both had a wonderful time. He had the limo pick him up—with effusive apologies, and the explanation that there was no subway to Stamford.

Mr. Glasser is a former executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Kingmaker

JOE LIEBERMAN

I HAD the privilege of knowing Bill Buckley for some 40 years. One might even argue that I would not be a U.S. senator without him. I ran for the Senate in 1988, and Bill was not an admirer of the Republican incumbent. He called me up and said, "Joe, I'm thinking of endorsing you. Do you think that would help you?" I responded, "Well, that's very good of you." Then he interrupted and said, "Please understand, this is the only time I am likely to endorse you in your career." I laughed, said I understood, and then said, "Your support probably would help." Bill then endorsed me in his syndicated column and, with the puckishness that was so

much a part of him, formed BuckPac, which he said was a political action committee open to anyone in Connecticut whose name was "Buckley" and who was committed to the defeat of the incumbent senator. They printed bumper stickers and the like and assisted me during the campaign.

I won by a very small margin. In a close election, there is more than one cause of victory, and in 1988, Bill and BuckPac were definitely part of the reason. I called to thank Bill and told him, "You played a rabbinical role for me in this campaign." Bill replied, "Well, what do you mean by that?" I explained, "Your endorsement of me and the columns you wrote conveyed to Republicans in Connecticut that it was kosher to vote for Lieberman."

Bill Buckley was a man of deep principle who recognized that civility in our political life is a virtue, one infrequently seen or heard today. He was a man of ideas whose writing and publishing gave birth to the modern American conservative movement and reminded us all of the importance of protecting individual liberty. His conservatism was moral, idealistic, and pure in the sense that it rejected bigotry and extremism.

I and so many others will miss him, but he has left us a legacy of thoughts and words in print, and the sound of laughter in our ears.

Mr. Lieberman is a U.S. senator from Connecticut.

Stylist

ROGER KIMBALL

WHAT made Bill Buckley such an effective writer? Let's pass over such pedestrian contingencies as truthful statements expressed in elegant English. Any gently educated citizen ought to be able to manage that. (Notice, you teachers, I say "ought.") And we can also leave to one side the stadium-sized warehouse of cultural reference, the easy commerce with the literatures of several languages, the communicable humor, the unerring sense of political relevance. Bill's rhetorical armory deployed all that and more—a

**Our ships will no longer lean
quite so far to the right.**

Godspeed WFB.



**THE CRUISE
AUTHORITY®**

Bach's Cadenza

THE stretch of music at the end of the Fifth Brandenburg Concerto of Johann Sebastian Bach is probably the first fully written-out (rather than improvised) cadenza in the history of music and, over 275 years later, still the most exciting. The harpsichordist (or pianist) is rattling along like a good soldier when suddenly he begins to take off. Up and down the scale, the harmonies subtly changing. A flute and a violin are still there, but their role diminishes and . . . the keyboard player is on his own! Sixty-five bars of music, with gradual changes of harmony and speed—demisemiquaver, the musicologists call a note that sounds for one thirty-secondth of a full beat—but wait! Then Bach changes the rhythm into thirds, so in the same mini-second you get not ta-da ta-da ta-da, but ta-da-da ta-da-da ta-da-da. And then, the rest of the orchestra comes back in and, in humble deference to the titanic passage just performed on the keyboard, does a routine ending, just nine measures and the movement is over. This is the beauty for which I confess nothing less than a passion.

—WFB



delicate sense of irony, a worldliness that was disabused but never jaded, a formidable vocabulary that commanded not just words but whole armadas of sense and sensibility.

Those qualities are some of the appoggiature of style that Bill deployed in his writing. But the magic leaven lay elsewhere. Above all, I suspect, it was inseparable from—in some ways it was an expression of—Bill's irrepressible curiosity about the animating mechanics of the world around him. Bill's style was at once seductively confidential—he always seemed to be writing for *you*—and magnificently selfless. His focus was adamantly outwards, gloriously involved with the particularities of his latest adventure. Socrates may or may not have been right that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” Bill indisputably showed that the unexamined world just won't cut it. “The entertainment committee,” he liked to say, “never sleeps.”

Bill's love of gadgets has been often remarked. In many ways, he regarded the entire world as his gadget, and he never considered a gadget fully mastered until he had both plumbed its intricacies himself *and* anatomized them for his chosen readership. His writing was didactic without didacticism. Sailing. Skiing. Playing the piano or harpsichord. Learning celestial navigation. Decisions about word usage or online dictionaries. Animadversions about the habit of serving a salad course at public functions. The particular virtues and defining idiosyncrasies of friends, colleagues, debating partners, even pets. He writes an essay about the life of a public speaker, and you do not simply eavesdrop on a notable practitioner of that art, you feel its rewards—and its rigors—from within. You also get passels of valuable practical advice. Specify, when arranging for someone to meet you, a slightly unorthodox time: Your ride to the airport is more likely to be punctual if you say 7:35 instead of 7:30. (“If you were back at the CIA,” Bill revealed, “you'd say 7:33.”) When you arrive at an untested lecture venue, be blunt: “I see dinner is at six. Will they be serving wine?”

“Apopemptic” is one of several linguistic curiosities I learned from Bill. It was, it saddens me to say, one of his favorite words in recent months. It means “vale-

dictory.” Bill Buckley was that rare creature whose effective writing was transparently a coefficient of effervescently effective living. Farewells are often difficult. I've never had one harder.

Mr. Kimball is co-editor and co-publisher of *The New Criterion*.

Music Man

RICHARD BROOKHISER

MANY people first met Bill (as I did) on *Firing Line*. That meant that the first thing you heard was the trumpet in the Brandenburg Concerto—a high-pitched reveille, as startling as it was bright, because the baroque trumpet had been obsolete for more than 200 years. If you weren't a classical-music buff, the only other place you heard that brash little instrument was in the Beatles' “Penny Lane.” The music gave you a taste of what was to come: something strange, important, old-fashioned, cool, and exciting all at once.

Bill could wield music as a weapon in the late-Sixties culture war, so much more acrid than our own. When some black-radical student called Bach an “old dead punk,” he answered with a column of dismissive wrath, calling the student, whose last name was Ivie, “Master Ivie.” But he turned to music for much more than provocation. His prose at its best was controlled by an inner metronome that was both powerful and idiosyncratic. He loved rickety Romance-language constructions (“than which”) because in English they had the effect of holding energy back behind a grammatical dam, until it could swoop to some colloquialism, some joke, some blow. His love of odd words was abetted by this sense of rhythm. It just might be two syllables too many to say of some liberal that he was “possessed by a demon,” rather than call him an “energumen.”

The music of notes, not words, was his passion. As with anything that delighted him, he loved to share and show it off. He made his musician friends into a kind of rotating house band, admiring them, praising them, and exploiting them shamelessly; he once threw Rosalyn

“That Rare Thing”

William F. Buckley, Jr. (1925–2008)

Mr. Buckley was “... that rare thing: a very opinionated man who listens very courteously to the other fellow.”

– *Clare Boothe Luce*



PHOTO: Appearing on *Firing Line*, Clare Boothe Luce clasps the hands of her good friend Bill Buckley.

Rest in peace, Mr. Buckley.

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Tureck, the Bach pianist, into the barn of some midtown ballroom, to breast the surf of an NR anniversary dinner. You had to be good to make the grade. One night a jazz trio appeared in his living room before an editorial dinner. They were not of his choosing, having been foisted on him somehow; worse, they stank. It was all he could do to be polite. What was the best music made in that room? Only he, who heard it all, could say. But Tureck played one Schubert bagatelle that sparkled as if Schubert had just been thinking of it.

Bill's last years were weighed by his and Pat's many ailments. It was hard to be old and tired when you had been so young and so vital. But music remained to the end. I will never forget him on the night when some dear friend, Bruce Levinston or Larry Perelman, was playing a favorite Bach partita, a taxing multipart piece. Bill said that Fernando Valenti ("an unbeliever") used to say there was a passage in it that made him believe in God. He asked the performer to make a running start into it, and told us

he would let us know when it came. He stood by the Bösendorfer, bent and intent, until the bass notes of the left hand began to thunder and swing. He thrust his arms over his head, like a referee signaling victory. Care and intelligence had delivered a cargo of grace and beauty. Victory. Victory.

Mr. Brookhiser is an NR senior editor.

A Light

JAY NORDLINGER

WHEN he wrote in appreciation of people, he liked to write about "the first time": the first time he met them. Well, I first met Bill at the Jefferson Hotel in Washington, over a long, long lunch. It was one of the most beautiful and rewarding experiences I can remember. I had just gotten engaged to be married; he had just lost a brother-in-law. We talked about marriage, family, the meaning of life . . .

Afterward, he sent me one of the best letters I have ever received. Somehow, I lost it.

When I met Bill, it was not like I was really meeting him. He was meeting *me*; but I already knew him. Knew him through his books, all of which I had drunk in, and through his television program. And he was the same, pretty much, or better.

He was my friend long before I met him: because his books comforted me, educated me, thrilled me. I'd tell him this once in a while. He'd smile.

I have spoken of comfort: Bill was a fantastic consoler, as your friend. He was great when you were up, celebrating your triumphs; he was maybe better when you were down. His criticisms would sting—but that's only because you thought the world of him.

He had a smile that lit up several counties around it. When you were smiled at by Bill Buckley, you were well and truly smiled at. And his voice—despite Leontyne Price, Kathleen Ferrier, and some others—was my favorite.

I confess I liked stepping out with him—you were the recipient of reflected glory. You took him to a restaurant, and the maitre d' would look at you wide-eyed. I'd take him to concerts and operas. People regularly rushed up to him, to say he was their hero. He'd twinkle at them.

Once, he asked whether I thought his absence from some large gathering would be okay. I said, "Sure, the world has to get along without you, once in a while." He said, "But who will be clever?" And that is a question that now resounds.

The last time I saw him, he was suffering, of course—"enfeebled," as he said. But you could see through the enfeeblement to the real Bill Buckley: warm, vibrant, amusing, brilliant—loving and lovable. He had a new King Charles spaniel, whipping around. "He's all puppy," he said. I loved that remark: *He's all puppy*.

Couple days ago, someone close to him said, "A great light has gone out." He was like that: kind of a constant round of starbursts. But all the qualities he represented remain. And the light is inextinguishable.

Mr. Nordlinger is an NR senior editor.

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Editor

RAMESH PONNURU

BILL'S life was blessed many times over, but old age was hard on him. A man of ceaseless activity, he had to slow down. He gave up first *Firing Line*, then public speaking, sailing, ownership of NR. He was in his seventies by the time I met him. In the last years of his life he could be downright morbid. But even on our last visits, he remained youthful in two respects. The first was his ability to appreciate new things: friends, devices, insights, performances. The second: those spectacular blue eyes, usually alight.

By the mid-1990s he was editing just one issue of the magazine each year. I always looked forward to his stints with a special dread. Under John O'Sullivan and Rich Lowry, we would all toss out ideas for editorials and then cull the list. Rather than cull, Bill would assign every topic to someone to write up. Perhaps he imagined that all of us could compose a quick sonnet to order. So we had to write much more. Then he would eliminate most of what we wrote, since there wasn't space, and rewrite the rest, since we had committed infelicities. Or I had, anyway. My copy was always vastly improved.

It has often been said that Bill preferred a four-syllable word when a two-syllable one would do, but my experience of his editing did not bear out the quip. Rather, he wanted to conserve the shades of meaning, sometimes fine, that unusual words had. At one of our editorial dinners—during or just after Bill Clinton's impeachment, I don't recall which—the main topic of conversation was whether “iniquitous” was the right word to describe the president's conduct. The same care led him to write a memo telling a few of us editors that in the previous issue we had used the dash promiscuously. I can understand why some people would roll their eyes. But I think he was correct, and I have hoarded my dashes ever since.

His extraordinary accomplishments have benefited the whole world. For those of us who knew him, what lingers is his sweetness, the memory of innu-

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merable kindnesses. I hope that he is now in a place where nothing is iniquitous and the eschaton has been immortalized.

Mr. Ponnuru is an NR senior editor.

Leader

JASON LEE STEORTS

BILL conscripted me—but that is not the right word, for I would have enlisted—on my first day at NR. He had decided to make a couple of video documentaries and he needed an assistant. I knew I'd have to do a good job for him, because he was Bill Buckley and I believed in him. Then we had our first meeting and I knew I'd have to do the best job in history, because he was Bill Buckley and he believed in me.

In that sentence is contained the secret of Bill's leadership.

Take it in parts. *He was Bill Buckley.* Which, being interpreted, means that never in your life had you met a human being so perfect. But this born aristocrat was a republican through and through, so that, when he gave me my marching orders that day, the conversation ended with: "You'll simply have to get used to calling me 'Bill.'"

And he believed in me. Because Bill made a point of believing in everyone he admitted to his orbit. He believed not merely, trivially, that you could do the job, whatever that was. He believed in *you*—in your mind, your personality, your potential, your life taken as a whole.

He always remembered what mattered to you. I don't think I ever saw him during the winter without his asking about the skiing in Utah. Before I ran a marathon, he was hungry for news of my training, and he wanted specifics: How long had my last run been? How much weight in water had I lost? Had that tendinitis in my right foot acted up again? "Gee, I'm terribly sorry to hear that. Is there a remedy?"

Above all, Bill believed that you should be his friend.

I have known some who thought that to live as a human being is not good. And then there are those who know it *can* be, who see that men can be good, their world beautiful, their hearts pure, their words

sincere, and their days full of joy: but who know also that this is by no means guaranteed. Hope can flag for this sort—my sort.

I once knew a cure. He was about an hour north of New York by train. I can't say which was more beautiful, the form of his life or the ideals to which he devoted it. What I can say is that he wanted nothing more than to share both with the people he cared about. And for such a gift, your best seemed too poor a recompense.

Mr. Steorts is the managing editor of NR.

Apolitico

ANTHONY DICK

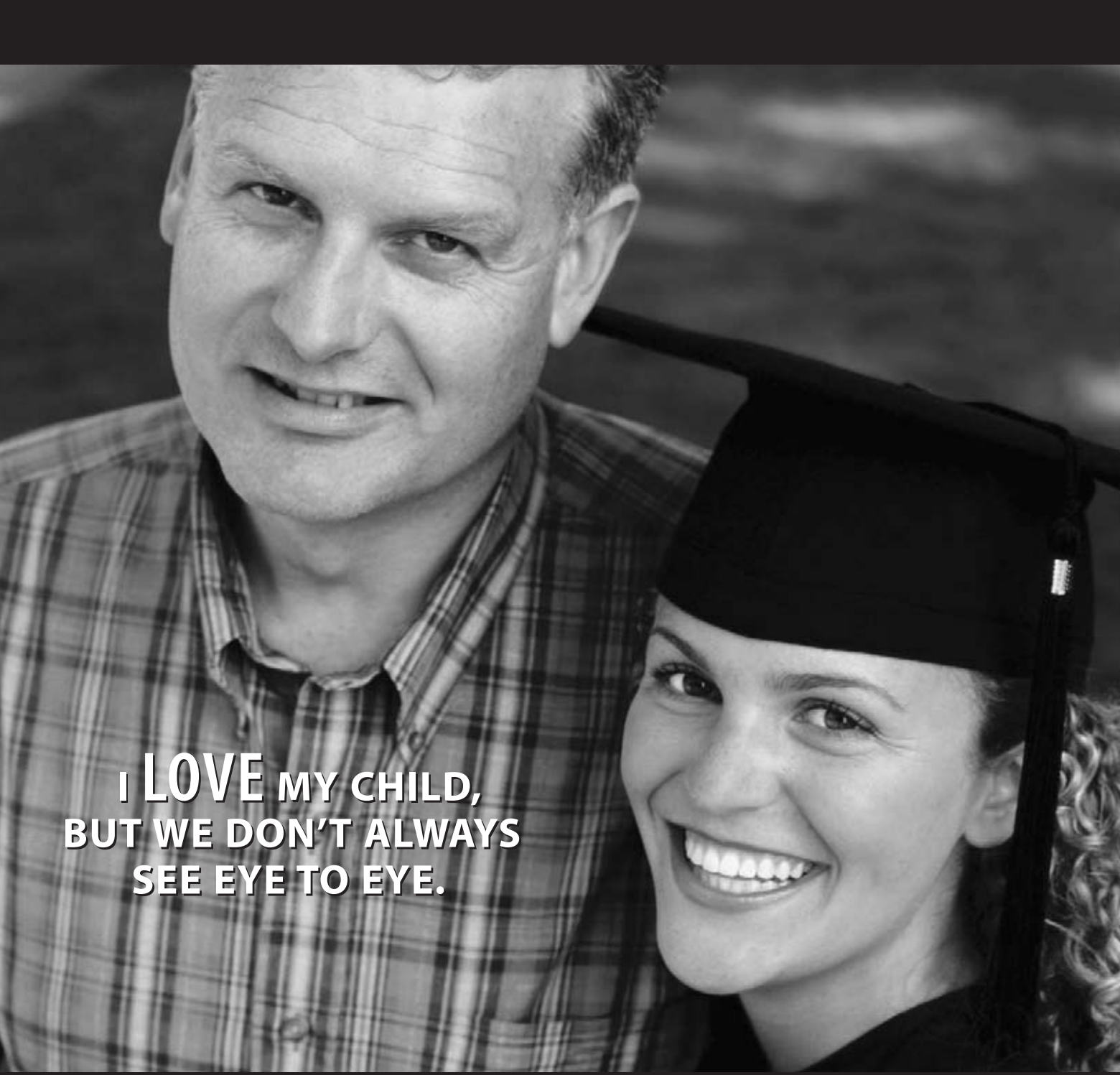
TO spend any time with Bill was to experience his passion for life beyond politics. Art, music, literature, faith, family, wine, humor, friend-

ship—these were the things he loved in life, and in which he found refuge from the controversies that stormed around him. Decent people should ignore politics, he once told me, if only they could be confident that politics would ignore them.

Most of my time with Bill came last year, after he asked me to be his research assistant on a book he wanted to write about Barry Goldwater. In his typical style, he didn't intend just to write the thing—he planned to pack up our computers with the big laser printer and our small library and fly it all to Bermuda, where we would rent a house on the water that would give us a view nice enough to help *stimmmulate* our productivity.

At 81, he kept an exhausting pace. He insisted on continuing his two syndicated columns per week, which he would dash off in the mornings between bouts of answering e-mails or dictating correspondence to me (most of it in reply to his





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legions of fans and friends). I would make slight edits to what he had written and he would breeze on to the next thing, calling out across the room when he needed something dredged up from one of the massive *Facts on File* volumes piled atop my desk. I would go to bed tired each night and come down for breakfast at eight each morning, and he would already be up in the study, attacking the next chapter, Bach on the stereo, sailboats bobbing in the water down below.

One day I noted how nice it must be—getting to spend so much time doing the things he loved, and having so much success at it. He quickly corrected me. He did *not* love writing. He found it difficult, tedious, and increasingly painful. Nor had he ever loved politics, which was awash in sordidness and banality. He would rather be reading, or sailing, or visiting friends, or enjoying any of the other luxuries his wealth could have afforded. He stayed at work, he said, out of a sense of duty to his country, to repay civilization for all the beauty it had given him, and to resist the totalizing designs of those who would push the tentacles of politics even farther into our lives.

Coming from anyone else, that might have sounded grandiose. Coming from Bill it inspired awe, and a sense of gratitude for the difference he made in the world, which needed him more than he needed it.

Mr. Dick is a student at Stanford Law School.

The Gift

DANILLO PETRONOVICH

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR. worked hard to the end. The legendary playfulness and wit continued to exhilarate. His magnanimity towered as ever.

I had the great fortune to work closely with Bill on his last two projects. Over the summer, he decided to write a book on Ronald Reagan. We were to begin immediately, but the lion's share of writing was to be done during December and January at an exquisite beach cottage in Florida.

Bill insisted I arrive in Fort Lauderdale a couple of days early to set up our office. He could not bear to waste time. We dug in his first day there—research and reading in the morning, then lunch, a writing session in the afternoon, followed by the cocktail hour.

That cocktail hour was a time to unwind and reflect. Bill wanted everyone who knew him to experience the wonders of the music he loved, and of the nearly 200 discs he brought, there was a clear favorite: Bach's *Goldberg Variations*.

On December 12 I turned 30. Bill arranged for a yacht to take us along the coast so that we could see Christmas lights. During the cruise, a nice lady came up to me and whispered, "Is he a senator?" Bill heard this, turned to her, smiled mischievously, and said: "I am a rock star."

I first met Bill Buckley almost five years ago, when I was invited to sail with him and two Yalies aboard the *Patito*. "I am so glad your first sail will be on the *Patito*," he said as we warmed up with a Kir and a Bloody Mary. We played word games, told jokes, ate marvelously, and confronted permanent questions. Quickly grasping that my passion was political philosophy, Bill turned the conversation to Aristotle, and the good life. I knew something about the former, but not nearly as much about the latter as my companion that evening.

Over the last seven months, we saw or talked to each another almost every day. I learned a lot more about politics, and writing, and printers and keyboards and WordStar. I also met a great man, and made a great friend. Ours was a joyful experience, and I will always be grateful to the Lord God for intertwining our lives.

Mr. Petronovich teaches at Yale University.

Servant

KEVIN FITZPATRICK

'H EY, Bill!"
"Hey, padre!"

Thus for over 20 years began my weekly telephone conversation with Bill Buckley. It was brief and had only

one purpose, *viz.* to confirm our usual weekend schedule, later called simply "The Usual."

The first part of The Usual was drinks and lunch in Stamford on Saturday at 12:45 P.M. (12:45 P.M. *exactly*, mind you).

The second part of The Usual would start at 5 P.M. on Sunday in the chapel of Bill's parish church. Bill quite rightly loathed the liturgical changes in the Catholic Church, especially the new Mass, so I offered the old Latin Mass for him and his servant and guests. He would give Mass a miss only when weather or extreme illness forced him. The last time I saw Bill—struggling for breath—was on the Sunday before his death.

Then back to lunch. Occasionally he and I would eat alone. One afternoon he was lamenting that a mutual friend had lapsed from the Faith. This always pained Bill deeply. I pointed out that virtually everyone lapses from the Faith for a time, at least intellectually.

Without looking up from his eggs Benedict he said: "I never did."

William F. Buckley and hyperbole were not strangers, so I said something like, Never? Not in prep school? Not in the Army? Not at Yale? Never? Bill looked up with tight-set eyes and pursed lips. I knew that what was about to be uttered would be *ex cathedra*, i.e., infallible and not to be questioned: "Never!"

Bill knew he was no saint, but he was a man of great loves. Love of his family, friends, the movement in defense of freedom and tradition we call conservatism, and the country he would have died for. But I believe that, as much as he loved the aforementioned, he loved God and the Church the most. And for Bill—as for Lenny Bruce—there was only one "the" Church: She was one, holy, catholic, apostolic, and Roman.

Bill reflected on his faith in his book *Nearer, My God*. The comma was critical, as the title was a prayer for himself. I think we can now have a reasonable and holy hope that that comma is no longer needed, and that Bill is now not near, but with, the God he strove to love and serve. *Requiescat in pace. Amen.*

Fr. Fitzpatrick is pastor at Holy Cross Church in Fairfield, Conn.



My Old Man and the Sea

CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

My father was an avid sailor. He had learned to sail as a child in upstate Connecticut, on a lake not much bigger than this one. Now he lived on the Connecticut shore of Long Island Sound and kept a 38-foot wooden sloop. It was named *Panic*, a name my mother found all too apt.

In his garage office-study there was a framed photograph of *Panic*. It had been taken by a news photographer at the start of the 1958 Newport–Bermuda race. In it, *Panic* is lying on its side at a more or less 90 degree angle, its mast submerged in the water. This undesirable nautical posture is called a “knockdown.” It was thrilling for me as a six-year-old to hear my father’s crewmates describe the sensation of thousands of gallons of the Atlantic pouring into the cabin at the start of a five-day ocean race.

I should mention a fact at this point, namely that my father is a great man. I don’t mean that in the usual platitudinous way. It’s a straightforward statement. He wrote over fifty books, many thousands of articles, founded a magazine, and influenced the course of history. You don’t have to take my word for it. You can look it up.

Looking back, I now understand that his greatness was of a piece with the way he conducted himself at sea. Great men *always* have too much sail up. Great men take great risks. It’s the timorous souls—souls like myself—who err on the side of caution; who, when they see a storm approaching, take in sail and look for snug harbor. Not my old man. Or as my mother used to put it, “Bill, why are you trying to kill us?”

This essay is adapted from a talk the author gave last summer at the Bohemian Grove.

Great men are also *impatient*. This trait showed up most vividly in my father’s manner of docking his boats.

Most people, when guiding, say, a ten- or twenty-ton vessel toward a dock, approach slowly. Not my old man. His technique was to go straight at it, full speed. Why waste time? This made for memorable episodes.

At one point, he owned a 72-foot-long schooner. It had an 18-foot-long bowsprit. With my father at the wheel, going hell-bent-for-leather toward a pier, that long bowsprit became a jousting lance. What vivid memories I have of people scattering like sheep at our approach. One time, someone actually leapt off the dock into the water in an attempt to escape. Over the years, my father took out entire sections of docks up and down the Eastern seaboard. His crew bestowed on him the nickname “Captain Crunch.”

When I was six, my father contrived a treasure hunt. He bought an antique wooden chest and filled it with silver dollars. Also with some of my mother’s jewelry. He and a friend sailed across Long Island Sound one weekend and buried it on a sandy spit called on the chart Eaton’s Neck, but which I will always call “Treasure Island.”

He told me that he had come into possession of an old treasure map. It was something out of Robert Louis Stevenson, scratched on thick parchment in blood-red ink. The location of the treasure was indicated with compass bearings. I couldn’t sleep the night before we set out, I was so excited.

We sailed across. After digging up half of Eaton’s Neck, we found the treasure. I can still remember the thrill as my fingers scraped the chest’s wooden lid beneath the sand. When we got

home, my father said it would be a nice gesture to give my mother the pirate jewelry. Okay, I said grudgingly, but I'm keeping the silver dollars.

It had been such an adventure that I persuaded my father that there must be *another* chest buried there, somewhere. I was quite persistent. In due course, he relented and procured another chest, which he filled with another fistful of my mother's jewels, this time adding—without telling her—a few pieces of her prized Queen Anne silver. He sailed across and buried it.

On the weekend appointed for the treasure hunt, Hurricane Irene struck. Irene was the Katrina of her day. She hit with such force that she rearranged the entire topography of Eaton's Neck, making nonsense of my father's compass bearings on the treasure map.

We sailed over the next weekend. We dug and dug. And dug. By the time we were finished, Eaton's Neck looked like it had been ravaged by a thousand prairie dogs. We never did find the treasure. For all we know, it's still there.

How thrilled my mother was to learn that her jewels and Queen Anne were now a permanent geological feature of Eaton's Neck. I wonder what the reaction of the insurance company was.

I'm not sure I understand. Was the jewelry stolen, Mr. Buckley?

No, we buried it. Is there a problem?

The next hurricane landed poor old *Panic* atop the Stamford Harbor breakwater. My father used *that* insurance payment to buy a successor yacht, a sweet, 42-foot Sparkman & Stephens yawl, Hong Kong-built. She was named *Suzy Wong* and she was a real honey, all teak and mahogany and carved Buddhas.

Every summer we would cruise the waters of Maine aboard *Suzy*. Sailing in Maine was always an adventure. The water is scrotum-tighteningly cold, the currents swift, the tidal drop pronounced, and the bottom unforgivingly rocky.

We'd drop anchor, a maneuver called "kedging," have a merry, kerosene-lamp-lit dinner, and then drift off to sleep. Soon, invariably, there'd be a sound under the hull: *thunk, thunk, thunk*. This announced beyond reasonable doubt that our kedge had slipped and that we were now positioned over a sharp rock, on a falling tide. Depending on how many bottles of wine had been consumed, the grown-ups were not always quick to respond. In due course my mother's voice would call out in the dark, "Bill, what do you propose to do about that *sound*?"

My mother deserves a word of appreciation here. She was a dutiful yachtsman's wife. In earlier times, the term for this occupation was "galley slave." She had been raised as a debutante, a beautiful, delicate orchid from Vancouver, Canada. Now she found herself cooking for eight men aboard a small boat with no hot water, and scrubbing the toilet. She would mutter darkly, "I was *made* for better things."

In those non-refrigerated, pre-microwave days, a lot of our food came in tins. These were stored below the floorboards in the ship's bilges. The bilges invariably filled with oily seawater, causing the

labels to decompose. As a result, we never knew what, exactly, we'd be having for dinner on any given night. If we were lucky, Dinty Moore beef stew. If not, we might well dine exclusively on Harvard beets and creamed corn. Some tins contained crêpes suzette. My father, not a cook himself, loved to douse them in copious amounts of Grand Marnier. At the climactic moment, he would drop a match into the skillet, causing a Hiroshima of flame to lick the cabin top. Again, my mother's voice was heard: "Bill, why are you trying to set fire to the boat?"

Some afternoons, my father might say, "Shall we have lobster tonight?" He'd steer for the nearest lobster pot. As a child, I found this thrilling beyond belief, for it was established lore that a Maine lobsterman could legally shoot you on sight if he caught you plundering his livelihood.

After laborious heavings on the line, the trap would come up, suddenly alive with frantic, jack-knifing lobsters. The trick was getting them out without having them clamp down on your fingers. My father would then put two bottles of whisky into the lobster pot as payment. I always wondered what the lobsterman thought upon bringing up his trap to find two fifths of Johnnie Walker Black inside. Did he scratch his head and say, "Reckon Mr. Buckley's back?"

Sometimes we barbecued on a little grill that hung off the transom. One night, as I was cooking six expensive filets mignons that my mother had asked me please not to

burn, the grill suddenly swiveled 180 degrees. Six expensive filets mignons and charcoal briquettes plopped hissing into the dark, swift waters of Penobscot Bay.

It was either rescue the filets mignons or endure another night of Harvard beets.

My friend Danny and I grabbed a flashlight and leapt into the dinghy. We fired up the outboard and roared off into the night. The current was running five knots. It was tricky work corralling the fugitive filets. We ran a few of them over with the outboard propeller, turning them into Salisbury steaks. No one asked for salt that night.

Such were our adventures. Larger ones loomed.

My father had always had the notion of sailing across the Atlantic, and this we did in 1975. The story is told in his book *Airborne*. We set off from Miami on June 1. A month and 4,400 miles later, we dropped anchor in the shadow of Gibraltar.

He taught me on that trip how to navigate by the sun and stars with a sextant. It's a skill that today, in the age of satellite navigation, fewer fathers impart to their sons. As I look back, it seems to me one of the most fundamental skills a father can teach a son: finding out where you are, using the tools of our ancestors.

I was 23 at the time. I'd spent a year between high school and college working on a Norwegian tramp freighter. I'd gone around the world, been in rough situations among rough people. I'd steered a 20,000-ton ship through 60-foot seas in a Force Ten gale in the South Atlantic. I knew my way around a boat.



If we were lucky, Dinty Moore beef stew.

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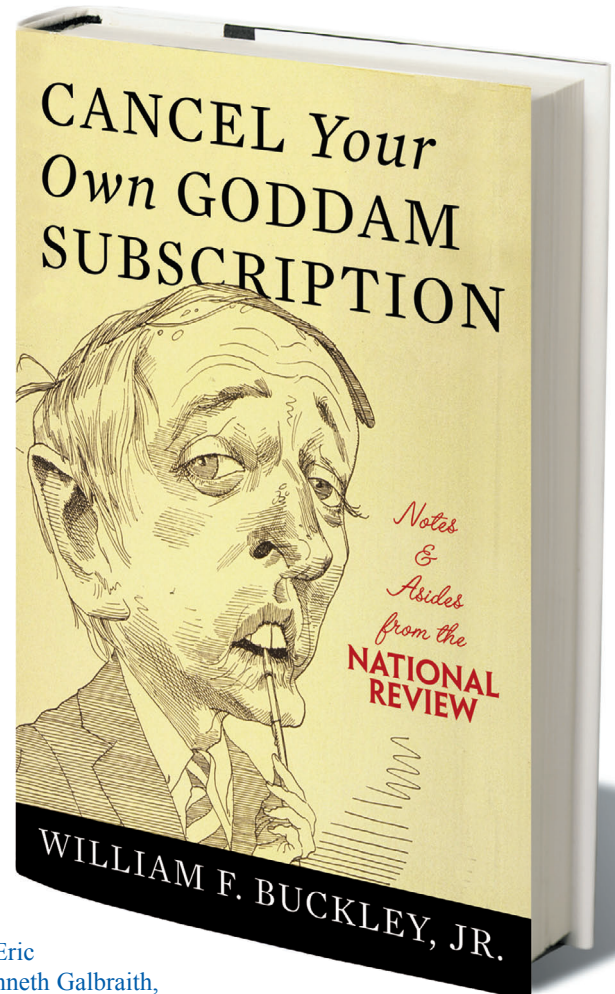
“Buckley,” as John Leonard once wrote, “—part Magus, prestidigitating supply-side whoopee, and part matador, goring liberal bulls—is in perpetual motion. He edits magazines, proliferates newspaper columns, anchors television programs, skis, sails, and speechifies. In and around those activities, on the keyboard of his Toshiba laptop, from the back-seat command module of his customized-in-Texarkana Cadillac limousine, or from the Gstaad chalet where he oil-paints with Nivens and side-slips with Galbraiths, or at the helm of his ketch, *Sealestial*, somewhere between the Galapagos and Byzantium, like G. K. Chesterton and Moses Herzog . . . Buckley writes letters to the world.”

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One midnight, I relieved my father on the 12-to-4 watch. He told me to put on my safety harness. "Yeah, yeah," I said, "I'll get around to it." He let me have it, in harsh words—perhaps the second time in 23 years he'd spoken to me that way. Falling overboard at night in the middle of the ocean without a safety harness isn't a thing to be taken lightly.

I obeyed, but later that night, still simmering over my affronted manhood, I made an entry in the log to the effect that Captain Crunch could take his safety harness and shove it where the sun didn't shine. The next morning, upon examining the log, he smiled, delighted at the mutiny.

What a trip it was! We sailed into the Azores, accompanied by a thousand dolphins; camped out in the crater of an extinct volcano; sailed through the spot where Nelson sank the French and Spanish fleets; and finally through the place that had once been called the Pillars of Hercules, end of the known world.

We had such a good time, in fact, that my father declared that we must sail across the Pacific, from Honolulu to New Guinea. We did, ten years later. I was then 33, recently married. "By the way," I said to my new bride on our honeymoon, trying to sound casual, "I won't be around much this summer."

She was a pretty good sport about it. The first time I'd brought her to Stamford to meet my parents, my father insisted on taking us out for a cocktail sail. It was a bright, beautiful summer day, but the wind was blowing about 25 knots, with six-foot seas. Lucy had been in a sailboat exactly once before, on a lake, in flat calm water. The waves crashed over the cockpit, hurling her to the deck. She smiled bravely and said, "Is it *always* like this?"

My mother, hearing this account after we got home, seeing Lucy drenched to the skin, acerbically remarked, "Yes, Lucy. With Bill, it is *always* like that."

Off we set across the great Pacific.

We made our first landfall a week later, at a strange little archipelago called Johnson Atoll. It's here that the United States stores its most lethal nerve weapons. For that reason, any ship sailing into the harbor is greeted not by lovely ladies bearing leis and rum punches, but by grim-faced Halliburton contractors aiming .50-caliber machine guns at you. Welcome to Johnson Atoll!

We made our peaceful intentions clear to the frowning colonel in charge. It was an ironic encounter, for that same day, back home in Stamford, Nancy Reagan, then first lady, was spending the weekend at our house with my mother. The colonel was totally unimpressed with my father's desperate name-dropping and informed us dourly that we must be on our way.

Somewhere between Johnson Atoll and our next port of call, we caught a dolphin. The mahi-mahi type, not the Flipper type. We were thrilled at our good fortune, as by now we were down to the detested Harvard beets and squishy, malodorous, rotting fruit.

We hauled the fish aboard—a beautiful, shimmering, iridescent

creature. I reluctantly prepared to deal the *coup de grâce* with a heavy winch handle. No, no, someone said: Pour vodka into the gills. It de-oxygenates them, producing swift, painless death. I did. It shuddered violently for a second or two and then was still. I recommend this protocol. If you don't die at first, keep trying. It's such a lovely way to go.

We made three landfalls on our way to New Guinea, each one something out of Gauguin. After the weeks at sea, we were avid for R&R; for a swim that didn't involve someone having to stand shark-guard with an assault rifle. For cold beer and hot showers. For a stretch of sleep longer than four hours.

But the moment we dropped anchor, my father would look at his watch and say, "Okay, it's ten o'clock now. What say we shove off at two?"

Danny and I would look at each other and shake our heads. I was learning that for my father, it was the voyage, not the stopping. Great men are not idlers; their idle is set too high. They're built for speed. I myself was built to lie on the sand and drink beer and be fanned by island ladies. But I am not a great man.

And so at two o'clock it was up anchor and off to the next idyllic atoll, some thousand miles away. I scribbled in my journal, "We are racing through Paradise." My father liked that and used it for the title of the book he wrote about the trip.

We did, however, manage to convince him to stop for a whole day at a place called Kapingamarangi. You may not be familiar with

Kapingamarangi, but it's there on the chart, 350 miles northeast of New Guinea. We sailed over the reef into a turquoise lagoon fringed with white sand and swaying coconut palms. Natives came out in a launch to greet us. This was 1985.

"Is there anything you need?" we asked, thinking perhaps batteries, antibiotics, tools.

"Among my people," the headman said gravely, "there is a great hunger for video cassettes."

There was a plane in the lagoon. It was still shiny-bright beneath the water. It had been there for forty years. I scuba-dived on it, saw the "U.S. NAVY" markings, the bullet holes that had brought it down, hem-stitched along the fuselage. A quarter mile away was a sunken Japanese vessel, the object, perhaps, of the American plane's last attack.

"What happened here?" I asked the headman.

He shrugged. "First the Japanese bombed the crap out of it, then the Americans came and bombed the crap out of it." World War II in a nutshell.

We were navigating again by sextant and stars. But my father had always been on the cutting edge of the latest gadgetry, and so we had with us a prototype of a satellite-navigation device made by the Trimble Company. My father had gone to enormous pains to procure it from his new best friend, Charlie Trimble. It was the size of a steamer trunk and had more dials and knobs and oscillo-



Father and son

The Skeleton in Your Closet Could Be an Heirloom

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I hope one day, like my grandfather's before it, that this pocket watch will become an heirloom my own grandchildren will cherish. The exclusive beauty and craftsmanship of the limited edition **Skeleton Pocket Watch** will make this timepiece perfect for your personal collection as well.

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scopes than Dr. Frankenstein's entire laboratory. My father would crouch before it for *endless* hours, twiddling the knobs, calling out numbers to us, which we'd plot on the chart.

"Where does *that* put us?" he would groan hopefully.

"Here," I said, pointing to a spot in the middle of the Brazilian rain forest.

It was back to basics, to the sextant and the stars. But he preferred those. I can still see him standing on the deck at twilight, searching the sky for Spica and Vega and Deneb, one hand wrapped around a stay for support, the sextant in his other, calling out, "Mark!"

A month after sailing out of Honolulu, we anchored in Kavieng Harbor on New Ireland Island. That night we had a celebration as liquid as the vast Pacific. I toasted him. "To Pup," I said, "who shot the sun, shot the stars, but who most of all shot the moon."

It was our last long sail together. My father was getting older now. So was I. I was a father of two. Then came the episode of October 1997.

We'd made a date the month previous to have an overnight sail to Treasure Island along with Danny, our old sailing partner. I took the train up from Washington, D.C., to Stamford. Along the way, I looked out the window and saw grey, stormy skies. I checked the weather in the paper. There I saw the word "northeaster." To anyone who's grown up along the Connecticut seashore, this is not a word congruent with "overnight sail."

My father was standing there on the train platform to greet me. This had always been a welcoming sight. Then I noticed, through the train window, that he seemed to be holding on to a sign, as if for support. Had he injured himself?

No, for when the train door opened, and I went to disembark, a violent gust of northeast wind blew me back into the train. I crawled out. Loose objects in the railroad parking lot were being blown about.

"We'll have a brisk sail," my father said.

Danny was there with him. I looked at Danny. Danny looked at me.

"We're going *out* in this?" I said, incredulously.

"Sure," said my father nonchalantly.

We arrived at the marina. The wind gauge indicated steady at 45 knots, gusting 50. To put it in context, hurricane-force winds start at 64.

"Pup," I said, shouting to make myself heard above the wind, "ought we to be doing this?"

"Take in the fenders," he merrily replied.

He had brought with him a friend of his, from San Francisco, as it happens. Poor, innocent lamb. He had never been on a sailboat before.

"Should I take a Dramamine?" he asked me nervously.

"Nah," I said. "You'll be too scared to throw up."

And so off we sailed into the storm. This was in my father's last

sailboat, a 36-foot fiberglass sloop named *Patito*. We somehow made it across Long Island Sound, through a screaming, dark night and 15-foot seas. I kept the radio tuned to the Coast Guard frequency. I thought of my two young children. I thought of my warm bed in Washington. I thought, *What the _____ am I doing out here?*

The next morning, after a sleepless night at anchor listening to the halyards slap furiously against the mast, dawn arrived greasily. The wind had increased. It was now gusting to 55 knots. The radio reported that half a million homes in New England were without power. Various governors had declared a state of emergency. We had gone for an overnight sail in a state of emergency.

I proposed that we row ashore and flag down a passing car. Or perhaps a passing FEMA vehicle.

"No, no," said my father. "We'll be fine."

It was daylight now, so we could see the seas we were up against and there was nothing pleasant about them. Perhaps you've seen the movie *The Perfect Storm*?

Somehow we made it back across Long Island Sound. My mother had spent the morning on the phone to the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard kept saying, "But Mrs. Buckley, what are they *doing* out there in this?"

Good question, I thought, gulping down a brandy with trembling hands.

I simmered for a few days, and wrote my father a blistering letter. *Never again*, I vowed.

Since then, I've taught my own son to sail. I remember the first time I placed his small hands, along with mine, on the tiller, and taught him the feel of the boat and the wind and

the sea. I thought back to when my father had first taken my small hands in his and taught me the rudiments of the same art. Now I was imparting to my son what my father had passed along to me: something elemental, thrilling, and joyous.

My father no longer sails. He's furlled his canvas and sold his last boat. Now he's preparing to shove off on a different kind of voyage. I wonder, will the angels scatter as he approaches the Pearly Pier?

I find myself thinking back to that night in '97, to my vow that I'd never again set foot on a boat with him. And now I think I would give almost anything for just one more sail together, even in a howling northeaster.

"A gone shipmate, like any other man," Joseph Conrad wrote, "is gone forever; and I never met one of them again. But at times the spring-flood of memory sets with force up the dark River of the Nine Bends. Then on the waters of the forlorn stream drifts a ship—manned by a crew of Shades. They pass and make a sign, in a shadowy hail. Haven't we, together and upon the immortal sea, wrung out a meaning from our sinful lives? Goodbye, brothers! You were a good crowd. As good a crowd as ever fisted with wild cries the beating canvas of a heavy foresail; or tossing aloft, invisible in the night, gave back yell for yell to a westerly gale."

NR



'I wonder, will the angels scatter as he approaches the Pearly Pier?'

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Turmoil in Gaza

What can the world, what can Israel do to restore order?

About two years ago, yielding to the pressure of “world opinion,” Israel decided to abandon Gaza and to withdraw the about 8,000 Israelis who had lived there for generations and who had created flourishing agriculture and successful industry.

What are the facts?

Israel's trial balloon. For Israelis, the abandonment of Gaza was also a trial balloon to assess what the relationship with a nascent Palestinian state would be. They got a quick and decisive answer. Almost from the very first day of their “liberation,” the Gazans launched daily rocket attacks on Israel. Fortunately, so far “only” about fifteen people have been killed and “only” about 300 injured by those relatively unsophisticated weapons. But it is only a matter of time until one of those rockets – whose range and effectiveness are being constantly improved – hits a school, a large housing complex or a hospital.

In the meantime, Israel responds with pinpoint volleys on the launching pads of those rockets. But they are easily movable and purposely located in heavily populated neighborhoods. It is thanks only to Israeli respect for human life that tens of thousands of Gazans have not perished in Israel's response to those barrages. We must ask ourselves what our country would do if Mexico were to launch thousands of rockets into San Diego. The answer is perfectly clear: We would retaliate in full force.

A wall forms the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. It is lightly guarded by Egyptian troops. The terrorist Hamas government decided to breach this wall and tens of thousands of Gazans burst into the Egyptian Sinai. The wall has now been rebuilt and most of the Gazans have been returned to their territory. Some, however, are still roaming the Sinai and have committed suicide attacks on Israeli citizens.

Gaza in misery. The situation in Gaza is indeed miserable. That is not the fault of the Israelis, but the fault of the Gazans/Palestinians themselves. In 1948, the UN proposed that “Palestine” be divided into an Arab and into a Jewish sector, with Jerusalem becoming an “internationalized” city. The Jews reluctantly accepted this partition plan. The Arabs rejected it out of hand and invaded the newly-born Jewish state with the armies of six nations. Had the Arabs accepted the partition plan or any of the many Israeli offers of conciliation, they would now have had their own state for sixty years and would enjoy prosperity and economic success just as Israel. Instead, focused exclusively on the destruction of Israel and the killing of the hated Jews, Gazans

The withdrawal-from-Gaza experiment did not work. Gazans destroyed the infrastructure and the basis for prosperity that Israel left in the territory. If, instead of being singlemindedly focused on lobbing rockets into Israel, it would have concentrated on peace and on sound development, Gaza could today be on the road to being another Singapore. But Gazans threw away that opportunity. What is more, having had the very bad experience with Gaza, Israel will think more than twice before turning Judea/Samaria (the “West Bank”) over to the Palestinians. Israel – its people, its cities, its airports and its industrial and military infrastructure – would be under the guns of those who are sworn to destroy it.

are living in misery, totally depending on the dole of Israel and on the support of the world.

Rather than bombing Gaza in response to the daily barrages of rockets, Israel has responded and is so far continuing to respond by selectively withholding economic support for Gaza. Although Israel allows the importation of essential foods and medical supplies, it has curtailed the importation of gasoline, diesel fuel and electricity. The world is outraged, but it is as humane a response as possible to the incessant shelling of Israeli cities.

“Israel will think more than twice before turning Judea/Samaria (the “West Bank”) over to the Palestinians.”

Constant smuggling of arms.

Even under the supposedly watchful eyes of the Egyptians, scores of tunnels from Egypt into Gaza have been constructed. High-power explosives and advanced weapons are daily

smuggled through these tunnels into Gaza. They are supplied and paid for primarily by Iran, which is closely allied to Gaza's Hamas terrorist government. One wonders why these tunnels are not being used to import food, fuel, medicine and clothing, rather than weapons. Also, why should Israel be responsible for the supplying of Gaza? There are no good answers to these questions.

When the Jews evacuated Gaza, they left hundreds of beautiful homes behind. The Gazans destroyed them. They were going to build highrises instead. In the more than two years since the Israelis left, not a single brick has been laid. The Gazans destroyed and plundered the sophisticated and fully computerized greenhouse installations that the Jews had left behind. They were worth millions of dollars, could have produced food for the residents and millions of dollars in yearly revenue for the impoverished territory.

It is said that one of the reasons for Gaza's misery is that it is so densely populated. Yet, Singapore, for instance, and Hong Kong are much more densely populated than Gaza. But the comparison to Singapore is significant. It, too, is densely populated, is bordered by an unfriendly neighbor, and has been devastated by war. Today, Singapore is an oasis of prosperity, a bustling center of financial and economic activity. Gaza, with the unstinting help of Israel and with the billions of dollars that the world community has poured into it, could also be such an oasis of peace and prosperity instead of the hovel of misery and decay and the cauldron of violence that it is today.

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the long view

ROB LONG

MEMORANDUM

TO: William F. Buckley Jr.
FROM: Management/St. Peter &c.
RE: Recent Complaints

Dear Mr. Buckley:

While we are all, of course, pleased to have you here with us, and to see you again joined with your beloved Pat, your arrival has not come without a certain amount of adjustment.

When people finally arrive here to their Heavenly Reward, they very often take a moment to “catch their breath” and relax a bit. We operate—and we encourage our residents to operate—at a slower, more leisurely pace. This advice, obviously, you have chosen to ignore. I believe your words to your intake counselor were something along the lines of, “That I should take the Almighty’s gift of eternity as an invitation to dilatory introversion is impracticable.”

Yes, well. Mr. Karl Marx has registered several formal complaints with the Administration about your repeated pranks—I believe, but cannot prove, that you and Milton Friedman were responsible for what we’re going to call the “jello incident”—and really, sir, if the gentleman doesn’t want to appear in a debate you’ve arranged on the topic “Resolved: This house believes that Marxism is an esophoric condition,” then please, do not keep asking him. Mr. Marx is here on a rather tenuous basis, and wishes to keep a low profile.

The same goes for Mr. Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In addition, some of the residents are complaining that you are monopolizing J. S. Bach. The two of you are seen together quite often, and it’s making

some of the lesser-known residents feel left out.

Also: There have been complaints about loud late-night discussions between you, Pope John Paul II, and Mr. David Niven.

With all due respect, sir, you seem to be under the impression that there’s some need to “hurry up”—a condition that I must admit was evident in your behavior below—when in fact you have, quite literally, an eternity to enjoy and nothing whatsoever to “do.” This is Heaven, Mr. Buckley, and we’ve done our very best to arrange it in as “heavenly” a fashion as possible. It is baffling to us, frankly speaking, that anyone would feel a need to “do” all the things you’ve insisted on doing since your arrival.

For instance, Heaven does not need a fortnightly journal of political and cultural thought. We’ve gotten along quite well for a long, long time without such things and see no reason why you arrive

and then—bang!—suddenly one starts appearing. And your recent cover, a photograph of former Connecticut governor Lowell Weicker under the words “We’re Waiting for You,” does not conduce to the gentle, soothing, spa-like atmosphere we’re trying to create here.

There is no need, either, for a heavenly version of *Firing Line*. You weren’t here for a day before my inbox was filled with complaints from several former heads of state—mostly the Hapsburgs—and some of the later Caesars, all of whom felt insulted upon discovering that they weren’t even considered as possible guests on your show. Your response, that you weren’t interested in listening to an “antediluvian gasconade,” sent me and the various former crowned heads of Europe straight to the OED Online for a definition. Shame on you!



And may I remind you, Mr. Buckley, that *Heaven doesn’t even have television!* This, for many of us, is what makes it Heaven. While it’s true that we do have a closed-circuit system, mostly for communicating important bulletins, having it commandeered so quickly by you and your “group” was disconcerting, to say the least. Imagine my shock, following a restful nap, at seeing you on the screen in a swivel-chair, with Mr. Edmund Burke to your left and Pres. James Buchanan—in tears—to your right.

And where did you get that clipboard? I left explicit instructions that you were not to be issued a clipboard under any circumstances.

Finally, it has come to our attention that you have already finished another Blackford Oakes novel. (Already! You’ve been here seven days, Mr. Buckley! Why are you behaving like this?) Queen Victoria has seen the galleys. Apparently, there is an erotic interlude described in the manuscript between Her Majesty and your fictional hero. Although she seems quite pleased by it, I know you’ll do the right thing and excise it before the publication date. Which raises another question: Since when does Heaven have a publisher? Is this another one of your “improvements”?

Honestly, sir, you are trying our patience. Why can’t you just sit still for, oh, a century or two? Ease into things, instead of all of this race race race, do do do?

This is the first time that anyone in management has needed to send a memo like this. Let’s hope it’s the last.

Sincerely,
Peter

P.S. Some wine is missing from the wine cellar. Some of the good stuff. I’m sure you’ll understand why I immediately thought of you.

P.P.S. And you’ve been a terrible influence on President Reagan. We may have to separate you two.

Remoras For Obama

I'LL call her Ada. We went to high school together. I hadn't thought about her for ages until Campaign '08 kicked off in January. Now I can't stop thinking about her.

She wasn't attractive but neither was she what the '50s called a "dog." She had an average face, an average figure, an average personality, and an average brain except in French class, where she persisted in forming possessives with an apostrophe "s." She was proud of her averageness and cultivated it like the rarest of orchids. Standing out from the crowd was her worst nightmare.

In our freshman year, Ada became obsessed with a glamorous blonde senior who was a cheerleader. I say "obsessed" because it wasn't a crush in the usual adolescent sense. I already had a crush on Madame Girard, our French teacher, and I knew the difference even though I could not articulate it. I sensed that there was no sex in Ada. She had nothing of the school-girl's chaste eroticism and derived no susurrant thrill from moony, on-the-street-where-you-live loitering. Instead she was a vessel of wrath, a self-appointed defender of the object of her obsession against the slightest criticism, ready to mount a security guard, a kangaroo court, and a firing squad to protect the whole street.

The cheerleader's last name was Hutchins, which people sometimes rendered as Hutchinson, but whenever anyone made this natural mistake Ada would bark "Hutchins!" and give him a look of withering contempt. One day when some girls got into a discussion about the color of the cheerleader's eyes, Ada went berserk. Fury bubbled up out of her and she started screaming,

"Agate is not azure! Sky blue is light and sea blue is dark!"

She went through a whole thesaurus, probably the only time she ever consulted one, to describe the cheerleader's features and favorite colors, but despite all the hard work she put into her adoration she never tried to meet the cheerleader or worm her way into her life, however tangentially. It probably would have worked because she fit the type—the plain girl who attaches herself to a belle and does her bidding—but Ada wasn't interested. She already had her obsession all mapped out and in place, and you don't mess with ideals. If she actually got to know the cheerleader she might have to change something.

As Barack Obama travels the land leading waves of "Yes we can!" the Adas of the media keep their long knives at the ready to carve up his critics. Anything less than total approval is called a "cheap shot." Arguments over his name abound. Mention that his middle name is "Hussein" and the Adas bark, "It's a common Kenyan name!" Comment on his donning a traditional African robe and they sneer, "It's common practice for officials to wear native costume on state visits." He failed to put his hand over his heart during the national anthem? One of the Adas will hastily snarl something about his father's teaching him the ceremonials of English soccer games. He refuses to wear a flag lapel pin? "That's a cheap shot!"

Like the hysterical fan who screamed "Leave Britney alone!" from atop the barricades of YouTube, the Adas of America have rallied to the battle cry of "Leave Barack alone!" and stand ready to defend him against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Especially domestic. As Hillary can attest, "Leave Barack alone!" means don't run against him if you know what's good for you. As the Adas up the ante to "Don't even think about running against him,"

somebody will treespike Ralph Nader. We have embraced identity politics in the most literal sense, and there's no turning back. You are what you eat and we have devoured Obama. Now nothing must be allowed to stop the great transformation set to take place on November 4, 2008, when 300 million Americans will all become idealistic, grammatical, and thin.

You can find out more about what Campaign '08 says about us if you switch, as I finally did, from *Hardball* to *Animal Planet* and watch their show

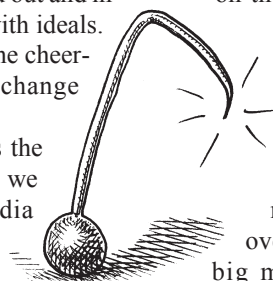
on the remora. It's a fish with a powerful suction disk that it uses to attach itself to whales and sharks. Lacking a dorsal fin and a swim bladder, the remora cannot survive alone. It needs motion to force water over its gills, so it adheres to big marine creatures and lets them swim for it.

In other words, the remora is a fish that can't swim, but not to worry. Everybody gets along fine because the relationship is based on equality. The remora takes nothing from the host except what would go to waste anyway, like bits and pieces of food that come off when the big fish shake their prey. It is waiting right there under the powerful jaws for the free lunch to materialize. In return, the remora cleans the host by eating parasites and bacteria from its mouth, including any feces it might have bitten into during a kill. It's a mutually beneficial arrangement marked by tolerance: No remora has ever been found in a shark's stomach.

The word *remora* is Latin for "delay" or "held back," suggesting that the name may have originated at the battle of Actium, when Marc Antony's flagship was said to be unable to move due to the fish stuck to its keel. However, this may be a legend invented by Antony partisans.

In any case, the remora's more common name is "sucker."

NR



Florence King can be reached at P.O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, VA 22404.

Reading WFB

CHARLES R. KESLER

AT Rancho del Cielo, high in the Santa Ynez hills west of Santa Barbara, Ronald Reagan kept a modest library. It's among the first things you see when you enter the little wood-frame house where he and Nancy relaxed. It's a rancher's library, not more than a few score books meant to help clear the head: among them, five or six Louis L'Amour novels, a dozen or more big books on western (as in cowboy) art, George Allen's *Inside Football*, and, casually separated on the shelves, two books by William F. Buckley Jr.

Over to one side is *Inveighing We Will Go*, Bill's sparkling 1972 collection of essays and columns; in the middle and up higher sits *Odyssey of a Friend*, his 1969 edition of the letters Whittaker Chambers had sent him. Of all Bill's literary productions, why these two? Hard to say. The letters are lyrical and apocalyptic, warning in gorgeous, sunset prose of the decline of the West. *Inveighing* has a sharply different tone, as the jaunty title promises. In this book, Bill commented from India, Chile, Switzerland, and other far-flung places—including Communist China, from which, accompanying Nixon on his breakthrough visit, he filed a brilliant series of dispatches on the grubbiness of détente. Bill inveighed against the continuing perils abroad and at home (e.g., Nixon's price controls), but somehow his own *joie de vivre* offered hope. Maybe Reagan loved sunrise and sunset.

Bill Buckley wrote or edited 35 non-fiction books. That includes *Cancel Your Own Goddam Subscription*, the last to be published during his lifetime, and *Flying*

High: Remembering Barry Goldwater, which Basic Books will publish this spring. The figure does not count *The Reagan I Knew*, which he was working on at his death. No one knows yet whether he finished a publishable draft of it.

Obviously, this five-foot shelf of books presents a problem to a novice reader, or even to a veteran Buckley-bibliophile who wants to plunge back in. Where to begin? Fortunately, the mass of words breaks down into several different kinds of book, and in each category a couple stand out. Truth is, he didn't write a single bad book. So even if these recommendations err—or you ignore them!—you have some delightful reading ahead.

Except for one problem, which is that only a handful of Bill's nonfiction titles are in print. One does not think of his books going out of print. For anyone who grew up reading them, who spent decades reading *him*, it seems impossible; as unnatural as if the daffodils stopped appearing. But it is so. One can find used copies of most of them easily enough (on Amazon, for example), but it is still a shock to discover that *Cruising Speed* and *Overdrive* and *Up from Liberalism* and *The Unmaking of a Mayor* are otherwise unobtainable.

For the true beginner, or anyone (there are such people) squeamish about used books, this constrains your choice to a half-dozen or so titles in print. Of these, happily, two make superb introductions to Buckley's works and days. *Miles Gone By* is his 2004 "literary autobiography," bringing together more than 60 previous writings (or excerpts) that afford, in his words, "a narrative survey of my life, at work and play." The reader will not learn a lot about conservatism, but he will come away with a sparkling, well-rounded portrait of WFB, as a child (do you know

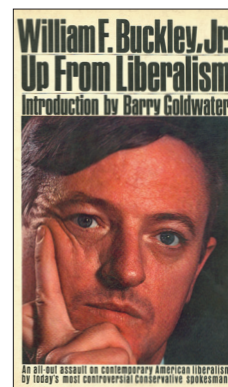
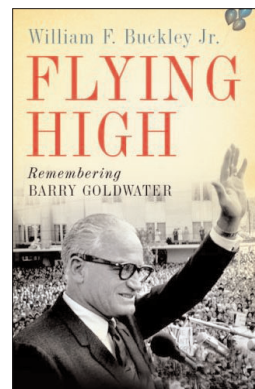
what it's like to grow up in a home with five pianos?), at Yale, sailing and skiing, with friends, performing and listening to music, and writing and editing. And *Miles Gone By* contains some of his best writing. So soon after his death, this is an affecting book to read because it brings him so beautifully to life.

As a bonus, the hardcover comes with a CD of Bill reading selections. You will regret that he didn't record more selections. The reader will regret, too, that inexplicably the book does not identify its sources, so that if, say, you wanted to read further about Bill's New York mayoral campaign, you would receive no hint from this autobiography about where to turn.

The second book the beginner should pick up is *Let Us Talk of Many Things*, Buckley's compilation of his most important speeches. Organized chronologically, from the 1950s to 1999, the book highlights Bill's political side, though it touches on many others, and provides a nice complement to *Miles Gone By*. Here are the dazzling early speeches and debates when the gloves came off: "It is clear from reading the

works of Norman Mailer that only demonstrations of human swinishness are truly pleasing to him." Or this gem from a debate over rescinding the Yale Political Union's invitation to Gus Hall, the head of the Communist Party, U.S.A.: "Fight him, fight the tyrants everywhere; but do not ask them to your quarters, merely to spit upon them; and do not ask them to your quarters if you cannot spit upon them."

The book contains loving tributes to friends and colleagues, a moving speech to his 40th class reunion at Yale, his valedictory to NATIONAL REVIEW, and much else. In combination, the two volumes provide the best available introduction to WFB. Not a perfect one, because neither book provides a broad and deep portrait of his politics. Bill's strength and weakness as a political thinker was that he was reluctant to generalize, to ascend from



Mr. Kesler is professor of government and director of the Salvatori Center at Claremont McKenna College.

particular conclusions to universal principles. He preferred to reason prudentially, deliberatively, one case at a time, which is why the columns and essays in which he ruminates over particular issues tend to be his best. Nonetheless, one can't proceed prudentially without occasionally acknowledging a universal or abstract truth, and he certainly could do this brilliantly, as in his youthful fencing matches with relativism. But he was never comfortable turning these duels into a doctrine. As he got older, he bore the additional responsibility of sustaining the conservative coalition that he had labored so ingeniously to contrive. The beginner hungry for philosophical musings on politics may nonetheless consult Bill's selections and commentary in his two anthologies of conservative thought, *Did You Ever See a Dream Walking?* (1970) and its update, coedited by me, *Keeping the Tablets* (1988).

What then of his other books, and what recommendations for readers more fa-

miliar with his writings? Broadly speaking, his works fall into three categories—political books written more or less de novo, collections of previously published materials, and autobiographical writings.

Among Bill's straight-ahead political books, *God and Man at Yale*, still in print, deserves special recognition. Its diagnosis of atheism and collectivism in high places is more relevant than ever, its protest against these enduringly persuasive. But the book is burdened by close discussions of professors and textbooks long gone (it was published in 1951), and as an empirical matter Bill's prescription of trustee and alumni revolt is pie-in-the-sky. His own recommendation was to read his new 1977 introduction, and skip the rest.

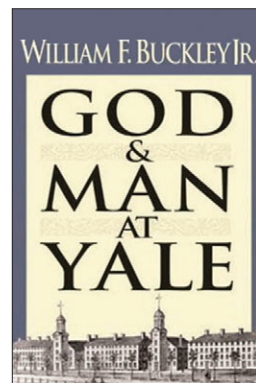
That leaves two or three books as the

cream of the crop. *Up from Liberalism*, originally published in 1959 and reissued with a new preface in 1968, comes closest to being a comprehensive critique of

liberalism. But the modern reader will notice, particularly on the issues of segregation and the "ontological emptiness" of democracy, how far conservative sensibilities have evolved. *The Unmaking of a Mayor* (1966) is perhaps his most enduring study, one part dissection of urban politics, one part sociology of mid-century liberalism at its most hubristic, and one part

the story of a democratic immersion for WFB. The experience allows him to accost some permanent truths about politics and about its uneasy relation with the life of the mind.

Gratitude (1990) is a very different case. Though the argument may not be



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entirely successful, it remains fresh and provocative. Bill's plea for a system of voluntary national service—which originated in another interesting book, *Four Reforms* (1973), devoted to the four biggest domestic issues of the 1970s: welfare, education, taxation, and crime—is notable for its respect for conservative distinctions. It never loses sight of the differences between public and private, state and federal, voluntary and coerced. Its prescription, however, did not find favor with most conservatives, who had good reason to be skeptical. Perhaps Bill was ahead of his time. *Gratitude* could be seen as the first herald of compassionate conservatism—call it the thinking man's compassionate conservatism. But in the end Buckley was thinking of something different and higher: He emphasized not compassion but gratitude—to *patria*, to civilization—and he was not scrambling to win the next election.

Bill published eight collections of his articles and columns, each containing some marvels. To my taste, *Inveighing* is the liveliest. The meatiest, however, is a collection of a different sort. *On the Firing Line* is an annotated selection of the best exchanges from Bill's long-running interview (and occasionally debate) show. Bill's commentary is extensive, not merely stitching together the disparate conversations but also providing a running political history. It's good to be reminded how disorienting the Sixties really were—not to WFB, of course, but to guests such as Timothy Leary, William Kunstler, and Muhammad Ali. Plus there's John Kenneth Galbraith, Malcolm Muggeridge, Clare Boothe Luce, Lee Kuan Yew, and many other fascinating characters, all expertly edited to bring out their fascination.

The final category of Bill's nonfiction writings is autobiographical. He wrote four explicitly autobiographical works—*Cruising Speed* (1971), *Overdrive* (1983), *Nearer, My God* (1997), and

Miles Gone By. The first two are in a genre that he invented: a-week-in-the-life-of books that show the man through the prism of a frenetic seven days of his

writing, editing, speaking, thinking, corresponding, wining, dining, playing with dogs, etc., etc. The third book is Bill's "autobiography of faith," as he called it, though he hauls in a "forum" of converts from time to time to help him explore theological questions. In addition, WFB's four sailing books deserve inclusion here: *Airborne* (1976), *Atlantic High* (1982),

Racing Through Paradise (1987), and *Windfall* (1992).

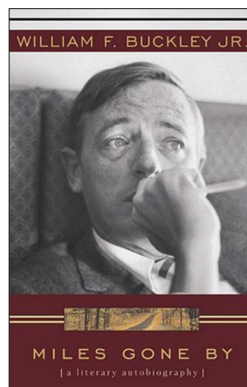
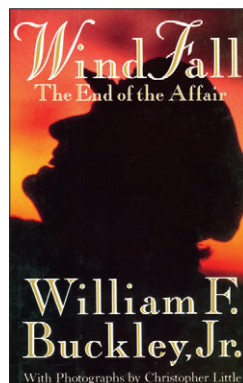
Of the latter genre, the first and the last may be the best, introducing the reader to his incomparable shipmates and then, in *Windfall*, struggling with the losses and transformations that time had wrought on them. He liked activities that pit man against nature, and his meditations on the sea and its lessons find him at his most introspective. Like the sailing books,

Cruising Speed and *Overdrive* invite us into the world of WFB, and what a delightful world it is. Who knew it could be such fun to peer over his shoulder as he answers his mail, or piles into the limousine to make the Monday-morning run from Stamford back to New York? If you want to read just one, read *Cruising Speed*, which created the template for this Johnson

who was his own Boswell.

One can't recommend his books to newcomers or to veterans without raising the question: *Why* read William F. Buckley? There are many answers—for his historical significance, for conservative illumination, for his lovely prose, for the wonder of the man himself. A hundred years from now who knows which of these reasons, if any, will still percolate. My own guess is that he will come increasingly to be seen as a major prose stylist. But for those of us who have known and loved him, it's hard to imagine that future generations will not want to meet, through his books, our hero.

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Let It Shine



RICHARD BROOKHISER

I WENT to the shoe-repair shop around the corner, which is one of those establishments, almost all small, which still have signs that are icons of what happens within: hanging eyeglasses for an optician; a neon needle and thread for the tailor in a dry-cleaning place; a neon bowl of noodles for a Chinese restaurant. The icon of shoe repair is a neon message written in the print of a sole: “HEELS IN 5 MINS” it promises, “SOLES IN 15 MINS.” The shop is still called “JOHN’S” after the Greek former owner, though it is now owned by Ariel, his Colombian successor. The boots I had left were almost ready, needing only to be shined. Why didn’t I put them on and sit down, the owner suggested, to make it easier?

I let my shoes and boots get dull; my wife says so, and she is right. I don’t shine them myself, and I take them in when the heels or soles give out, which is less often than they should be shined, but more often, in New York with its hard pavements and hard strides, than they would be taken in elsewhere. So this was a rare occasion for getting worked over.

My copy of *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (*A Series of Very Plain Talks on Very Practical Politics*), collected by William L. Riordan, has as its frontispiece a 1905 photograph of its hero, former state senator George Washington Plunkitt (D., of course), seated at what is described as his “rostrum,” the bootblack stand of New York County Court House on Foley Square. It is a picture of almost Oriental ease and pomp. Crossed American flags

and framed pictures of unidentifiable worthies make the backdrop. Senator Plunkitt, “the Tammany philosopher,” wears a shiny topper and a handlebar mustache. Three men in dark three-piece suits with boutonnieres stand to his right. The bootblack, a boy, stands to his left. Plunkitt’s elbows rest on the arms of his chair, hands hanging casually over his lap. He might be about to speak, and the book is the result of many such speeches, recorded by Riordan. The business of the photograph is Plunkitt’s left foot, elevated and ready for action—the bootblack’s action, not his. But the most striking thing about his pose, and mine when I took my place in Ariel’s chair, is the sitter’s elevation. The bootblack stand or the shoeshine chair is a throne. Everyone on mere ground level, from boys to big muckety-mucks, is several feet down. You are taller than Yao Ming, taller than a ski rack on an SUV.

Feet are appendages that do the dirty work. Since we walk upright, they are not prehensile; if they were, we might credit them with more subtlety. Until kicking was tamed by dance and sports, it was an action reserved for expressing contempt, or somehow contemptible. Wafflers kick the can of decision down the road; compulsives are urged (usually in vain) to kick their habits. Idle fellows are said to kick excrement, though it is not said that way; their temperamental opposites kick posterior, though it is not said that way either. Placing the instrument of such low purposes on or above another human being signifies power. One of the most compelling moments of Bernardo Bertolucci’s movie about the last emperor of China comes when a court official, bearing important news, mounts a horse by stepping up off the immediately bent back of a servant, four millennia of hierarchy in one bow and one bound. Van Dyck painted Charles I presenting us with a turned-out foot not only to make the short monarch seem tall (as our eyes follow the line of his leg), but to suggest his political views. “A subject and a sovereign are clean different things,” his

majesty once remarked; “here—my foot,” says his pose in van Dyck’s portrait. In some cultures displaying or misusing the foot is aggressive or insulting. Guides to Thailand warn you never to stop windswept paper money with a stomp. The King is on all bills, you would practically be committing treason. And never cross your legs on a bus so that your sole faces another passenger; you might as well moon him.

On the plinth of the shoeshine stand, in front of the chair, are two brass footrests. The heel clicks into a little escarpment of metal so that nothing moves around. And so the bootblack (not Ariel, but an employee) goes to work.

This all seems to be leading to a point about domination in daily life, but it is actually leading the other way. I am not the king of England, or a courtier of the last emperor of China. I’m sitting up there for the same reason as the person who preceded me, and the person who will follow me:

The bootblack stand or the shoeshine chair is a throne. Everyone on mere ground level, from boys to big muckety-mucks, is several feet down. You are taller than Yao Ming, taller than a ski rack on an SUV.

We all paid an inconsiderable sum of money, tip included. Most of the customers of the shop work in a vast Beaux Arts office building a block away, and most of them I am sure are not CEOs. Women come to the shop to get their shoes shined, so long as they wear pants and sit with minimal modesty. If the bootblack wants a pair of his own shoes professionally shined, he can go to some other stand and get them done. The thrill of the throne is real, but fleeting; that is probably why we don’t need Cromwell and don’t get Communism. Role-playing and a little money to spread around is the grease of republican government.

I will have to go more often, since I’ve started wearing boots. My Christmas present was a chamois-colored pair with a design of printed and embroidered rattlesnakes. That would defy polishing. But I have several black pair, plain or stitched, that will need care, especially as snow turns to rain. I will not hold forth, having done so here. Think of it as one very plain talk on very practical semiotics.

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MARK STEYN

The Good Guy's Good Guy

WE have Samuel Vaughan of Doubleday to thank for William F. Buckley Jr., spy novelist. Like Margaret Thatcher, Bill had greatly enjoyed Frederick Forsyth's *Day of the Jackal*, and like any good publisher Mr. Vaughan seized on this slender fact and proposed that Buckley follow Forsyth, and le Carré, and Ambler and Maugham, and become a writer of thrillers *lui-même*. Why not? Bill was a have-a-go harpsichordist and it surely couldn't be more difficult than that. So William F. Buckley, Yale '50, created Blackford Oakes, Yale '51. And doing the Hollywood-actress thing by shaving a year off the birth certificate only increased the strong suspicion that the author had created Oakes as an alter ego even more implausibly glamorous than the original:

Caroline looked at him, sitting on the sofa next to her, the man-boy American, loose, bright, shining with desire and desirability, his port and coffee at his side, and she felt something she had never felt before.

So did a few reviewers: Was it all a massive leg-pull? Published in 1976, Blackie Oakes's first adventure is set in the London of a quarter century earlier. "Caroline" is Her Majesty the Queen, the young monarch newly succeeded to the throne. Surely even Buckley wouldn't make her just another Bond girl, the ultimate bit of (as they say in Britspeak) posh totty? But oh, yes, he did. On Oakes's first CIA assignment, going undercover means the bedspread at Windsor Castle:

"Light the fire," she said, and he did so, and came back to her with the glass of champagne. She put it down and said, "England has taken the initiative."

He rose, extended his hand, and brought her silently into the bedroom.

And, when his mission is accom-

plished, he whispers across the pillow: "Courtesy of the United States, ma'am."

This isn't merely a perk of the job. British Intelligence in the early Fifties has been hollowed out by Soviet agents in the highest echelons of the state, and Oakes's job is to find the mole before he damages the monarchy itself. And if saving Washington's closest ally involves making the Anglo-American "special relationship" even more special, so be it. Queen Victoria is said (apocryphally) to have advised her daughter on her wedding night to "lie back and think of England." This time, it was the Queen who lay back, while Blackford Oakes thought of America.

In a way, Bill Buckley was evoking a great romantic adventure of a century earlier, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, by Anthony Hope, in which a dashing young Englishman has to save Ruritania by posing as the rightful king and wooing and winning Princess Flavia. Of course, Flavia never took the "initiative" in the sense that Queen Caroline does. "Is love the only thing?" the Ruritanian princess asks her English adventurer. "If love were the only thing, I would follow you—in rags, if need be—to the world's end; for you hold my heart in the hollow of your hand! . . . But honour binds a woman too, Rudolf. My honour lies in being true to my country and my House."

Ah, but times change, even in royal bedchambers. I had heard that *Saving the Queen* had caused a chill in Bill's relations with the House of Windsor, but, *au contraire*, a member of the royal family told me a few years back that it was quite a hit at the palace.

Not everyone cared for the dashing Blackie: *Time* sniffed that Buckley was "writing with his foot in his cheek." But in the course of the series he made a significant contribution to what was, after all, the Cold War's own literary genre. There had been espionage thrillers of the First

and the Second World War, but once it was decided that the Cold War would not be a hot one, spying was no longer simply a prelude or adjunct but the main event. Blackford Oakes was created as an antidote to the le Carré ethos of moral equivalence, and Bill used his good guy—once he'd got over Queen Caroline—to explore critical moments in the West's long confrontation with the East.

The best entry in the series, *Stained Glass*, finds Oakes dispatched to Germany to keep an eye on a rising political figure, Count Axel Wintergrin, who is troublesome to Washington because he

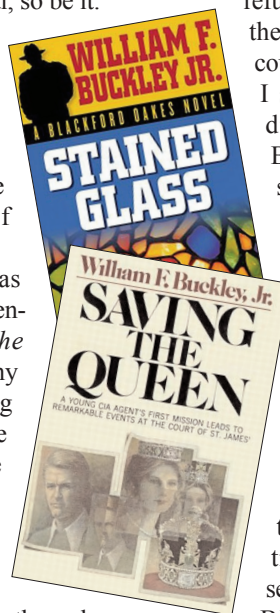
refuses to accept as permanent the division of Germany. A couple of years back, Bill and I spent an agreeable lunch discussing the novel. In Buckley's Cold War, there's something to play for. In le Carré's, there's nothing:

The formula's murky wilderness-of-mirrors moral ambiguity is ultimately reductive. I thought the young count's line in the book about the "American right" to "hemispheric torpor" especially relevant at the start of a new existential struggle of which we seem already weary, though Bill was less persuaded of

the relevance. Nevertheless, the central point of the Buckley spy novels is an important one: In the crucial early years of the conflict, the good guys should have done more, faster.

Incidentally, when I remarked on NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE that that line about "hemispheric torpor" contained more truth than the entire le Carré oeuvre, a couple of readers wrote to point out that, say what you will about the politics, the world of George Smiley & Co. is very good on office life. Well, up to a point. The seedy MI6 loser trudging home from the dingy Whitehall office through bleak rain-streaked streets to the dreary flat with the tea kettle nevertheless manages to enjoy so extraordinary an amount of leg-over action as to make Queen Caroline's seduction a model of authenticity. I think even on the sex I'll take Buckley.

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The top half of the image features a dark blue background with several large, white, embroidered stars. The stars are of various sizes and are arranged in a pattern that resembles the stars on the American flag. The embroidery has a textured, fringed appearance.

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Americans will not be able to rely solely on Social Security for a comfortable retirement. **The Social Security Administration projects that monthly government checks will cover an increasingly small percentage of the average retirement in the future.** There's debate as to whether Social Security should be repaired or replaced. But what's clear is that we need to reform it now.

2. BOOST RETIREMENT PLAN ENROLLMENT.

Company matches in 401(k) plans are one proven way to increase savings. Other innovative approaches companies can use include **automatic 401(k) enrollment, sometimes called opt-out plans;**

automatic increases in contributions as employees get raises; and encouraging both younger and part-time workers to participate. In one study, just switching to automatic enrollment resulted in a 30% increase in worker participation.

3. REWARD THOSE WHO SAVE.

Ultimately, everyone is responsible for their own retirement. That's why Allstate is a strong supporter of tax laws that help reward people for saving. Tax-advantaged savings vehicles such as **annuities and IRAs are two examples of products that can help America build a strong retirement foundation.**

Together, these ideas will help make sure that on your 100th birthday, you'll be able to afford the celebration. **Learn more and join the debate at RetirementDebate.com**

Let's save retirement by saving for retirement.
THAT'S ALLSTATE'S STAND



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